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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE FUNCTION OF THE ARCHITECTURAL IMAGE IN GEORGE HERBERT'S POETRY

by

© AILEEN MACLEOD SINTON

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "The Function of the Architectural Image in George Herbert," submitted by Aileen MacLeod Sinton in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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Date 15 July 1980

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INTRODUCTION

Since the publication of The Temple in 1633 George Herbert's reputation as one of the great English devotional poets has never wavered. Generations of Christians representing every denomination have recognized and responded to the authenticity of the experience recorded there, an eloquent testimony to Herbert's catholicity.[1] With other metaphysical poets his secular popularity suffered a decline from the end of the seventeenth century until the beginning of the nineteenth, when Samuel Taylor Coleridge acknowledged that he was "a true poet."[2] Even so, Coleridge felt that Herbert's work could not be properly appreciated unless the reader was also "both a zealous and an orthodox, both a devout and devotional Christian," and Herbert continued to be valued most for his piety. In the present century T. S. Eliot's high estimation of Herbert's "spiritual stamina,"[3] and his insistence that "... there is brain work and a very high level of intensity: his poetry is definitely an oeuvre to be studied entire" generated the resurgence of interest and serious re-appraisal that has recently been accorded all the metaphysical poets.

Herbert's reputation is now higher than it has ever been since the seventeenth century, which is an unexpected phenomenon in a materialistic age with the Bible and western Christian tradition relatively peripheral. It can be asked what the average reader finds

attractive in his poetry, and perhaps part of the answer is that he admires the courage of Herbert's rigorous self-examination and his uncompromising honesty in revealing what he finds within. This has an appeal to a post-Freudian generation familiar with the trauma of laying bare the shrinking ego to alien eyes. Yet Herbert would not have found the twentieth century's preoccupation with the self congenial. As a seventeenth century poet he was not particularly concerned that the revelation of personal feelings and concerns in his work should assist in a process of "self-discovery," but only that such a record would be of assistance to others in their search for spiritual stability.

That his work is so accessible three hundred years later is due to what most critics call "deceptive simplicity"[4] closely allied to superb "craftsmanship,"[5] and certainly Herbert's studiedly plain diction, varying line lengths, rhymes and rhythms all play their part in achieving his effective low-key style. It is the rare critic who accuses him of "a cloying and almost infantile pietism,"[6] for quite the reverse is the case. Herbert is never sentimental, and there is a peculiar hardness in his work that appears to be somehow related to his liking for stone imagery.[7] His images contribute significantly to the "deceptive simplicity," in the very ordinariness that he makes so extraordinary. He had recourse, as Rosemond Tuve observes, to a large store of mediaeval and Biblical images, and these help to give Herbert's lyric form the compression and economy that it demands.[8] If some of the meaning of the traditional imagery has been almost lost to the twentieth century, a great deal of it remains comprehensible to a degree because of its universality.

This is particularly true of architectural imagery. It requires no specialised knowledge to imagine a house being built; the image is almost as old as man. Herbert's architectural imagery, therefore, goes some way in keeping his poetry contemporary. It often stems from mediaeval iconography, but even then its roots lie mainly in the Bible. A knowledge of mediaeval and Biblical precedents helps to elucidate Herbert's meaning, although his poetry, if Eliot's stricture is taken seriously, yields to being read as "an oeuvre entire" -- it comments on itself and becomes to a great extent self-explanatory. This is proof positive that the work has organic unity, although that shows itself in other ways. Patrides has pointed out, for instance, how each poem in The Church "prevents" the next[9].

However much a knowledge of mediaeval iconography and the Bible do help to interpret Herbert's work it is necessary that they be supplemented by a consideration of the underlying theology. The major architectural images are illumined by some knowledge of orthodox Protestant interpretation of the Old and New Testaments. The continental Protestantism that Herbert and his contemporaries accepted involved theological concepts which later were more closely associated with Puritans than Anglicans, but in Herbert's day these were the common property of both. The differences, in the early 17th century, were still over liturgy, sacraments and vestments, not theology. The dominant architectural image, as the titles The Temple, The Church-porch, The Church and The Church Militant imply, is of vital importance in Herbert's work. It functions in a great variety of ways, for Herbert's images are never static, but in the main it carries the theme of God's grace manifested in the Old and New Dispensations, and

the individual believer's confrontation with the world, the flesh and the Devil. The minor clusters of architectural images, tombs, doors, windows, floors, beams, and building materials such as stone, wood, glass, marble, gold and bronze work, on occasion, to augment the major architectural imagery, or sometimes are integrated with other images. They themselves are often starting places for meditations.

In the examination of three poems, "The World," "Man" and "Sion" [10] where, as C. A. Patrides points out, the architectural imagery is dominant,[11] it will be seen that Herbert uses it to carry a number of themes, all of which are related to the over-riding metaphor of The Temple. These poems are not amongst Herbert's most successful, for they lack the intensity and dramatic tension of his best work. They do, however, provide a philosophic background for his other poems, and are related particularly to those which precede and follow them. The nature of the architectural imagery is well suited to the philosophic tone of these poems, which conveys some of the central doctrines of the Christian faith, as well as a Christian view of world history for, as Rosemond Tuve remarks, "he reads history and biblical story as one great web of metaphor."[11] The poet's firm control of metaphor is apparent in all three poems; it serves his purpose rather than overshadowing it by unnecessary elaboration. The restraint and decorum are typical of a poet who had no desire to curl "... with metaphor a plain intention,/ Decking the sense, as if it were to sell." Nevertheless, Herbert's architectural imagery carries an intellectual weight which requires explication if The Temple is to be properly appreciated.

Footnotes

[1]Margaret Bottrall, George Herbert (London, 1954) p. 145.

[2]Roberta Florence Brinkley, ed., Coleridge on the Seventeenth Century (New York, 1968), p. 534.

[3]T. S. Eliot, "George Herbert," The Spectator, CXLVIII (1932), pp. 360-361.

[4]A close reading of any Herbert poem illustrates this point. In The Poetry of George Herbert (Cambridge, Mass., 1975) Helen Vendler devotes an entire chapter to a detailed explication of one of his shortest, best known poems, "Vertue." She contends that "To read Herbert less attentively is to miss many of his dimensions . . . I wish at least to establish as a principle that Herbert's simplicity is deceptive" p. 3.

[5]See the introduction to The Works of George Herbert (Oxford, 1941), pp. xlix-l. Dr. F. E. Hutchinson focuses attention on some of Herbert's outstanding stylistic features and says, "His craftsmanship is conspicuous. Almost any poem of his has its object well defined . . . Few English poets have been able to use the plain words of ordinary speech with a greater effect. From Donne he had learnt the use of the conversational tone, which establishes an intimacy between poet and reader; and when his poems are read aloud the emphasis falls easily on the natural order of the speaking idiom." It is small wonder that Herbert appealed to Coleridge who observed that Herbert's diction is "pure, manly and unaffected." See Brinkley, pp. 533-540.

[6]Yvor Winters, Forms of Discovery: Critical and Historical Essays on the Forms of the Short Poem in English (London, 1967), p. 88.

[7]Joseph H. Summers comments on this in George Herbert: His Religion and Art (London, 1954), pp. 89-90, "Herbert rings all the traditional changes on 'stone' as the chief architectural element, under its various guises as the heart of man, the tomb of Christ, the law of Moses, 'the stone that the builders rejected'. The hardness of the stone was generally recognized; it was the employment of that hardness in the construction of a true temple which appealed to Herbert's imagination." It is perhaps this "hardness" which W. H. Auden finds so attractive in Herbert's work. He pays him the compliment of being one of the two poets he would have most liked to know. See George Herbert: Selected by W. H. Auden (London, 1973), p. 7. It seems to me that this "hardness" is the intrinsic quality which these two poets share, deriving from a similar quality of sheer tough-mindedness.

[8]Rosemond Tuve, A Reading of George Herbert (Chicago, 1951), p. 110. Like every admirer of Herbert I am indebted to Professor Tuve for opening up the richness of his mediaeval and Biblical imagery, a knowledge of which greatly enhances a true appreciation of his poetic genius. A comparison of William Empson's interpretation of "The Sacrifice" in Seven Types of Ambiguity (London, 1947) with that

of Rosemond Tuve demonstrates how far afield it is possible to wander without this background knowledge.

[9]C. A. Patrides, ed., The English Poems of George Herbert (London, 1974), pp. 18-19. See also footnote 15 on page 47.

[10]All quotations from these three poems and Herbert's other works are taken from The Works of George Herbert, ed. F.E. Hutchinson (Oxford, 1941). Hereafter cited as Works.

[11]Patrides, p. 15.

[12]Tuve, p. 117.

CHAPTER I

THE WORLD

Patrides points out that each poem in The Temple "prevents" the next, and at first reading "The World" might appear to be a strange poem to follow "Sighs and Grones." The calm, dispassionate voice of the neutral narrator in "The World" has displaced the fervency of a deeply felt personal plea in "Sighs and Grones," and the apparently simple allegorical story is very different from the preceding agonised prayer. As the poem is studied in depth, however, it will be seen that the theme and some of the imagery reach back to "Sighs and Grones and forward to anticipate the next poem, "Colossians III.3 Our life is hid with Christ in God."

To a large degree the architectural imagery which frames and sustains "The World" is responsible for the detached tone. The building of a house is a mundane topic which excites no upheaval in the soul as does the speaker's desperate awareness of sin in "Sighs and Grones," and it lacks the pervasive note of faith -- the certainty, joy, and even playfulness -- inherent in "Colossians III.3." But the architectural imagery implies a great deal more than is seen on the surface as its traditional roots are sought and the underlying theology exposed. The close relationship between the three poems then becomes clear, displaying that organic unity which can be demonstrated throughout The Church. It evolves primarily from the nature of Herbert's subject -- man's attempt to throw off "the flesh"

or "old nature" or "old man" and put on the "new man," "new nature" or "new creation" in Christ.[1] To overlook this essential unity in The Temple is to miss some of its beauty, for as Helen Vendler says it is ". . . one of the most beautiful and finished books in our language."[2]

The Williams manuscript shows that Herbert intended his work to be read as a unified whole. The date of W is uncertain but it is thought to have been written prior to 1629. Its tripartite division into The Church-porch, The Church and The Church Militant is carried over to the later Bodleian manuscript from which the first edition of 1633 is assumed to have been printed,[3] (conclusive proof that the order of Herbert's work is not random). "The World" is found in the W manuscript, and therefore assigned a date some time before the poet took up the living of Fugglestone-with-Bemerton, near Salisbury in Wiltshire in 1630. Mary Ellen Rickey comments that it is one of the four early poems which "'take place' in extra-ecclesiastical environments," the others being "Jordan" I, "Jordan" II and "Humilitie."[4] This observation is incorrect, for the next poem to be considered in this thesis, "Man," is also found in W, and it, too, takes place in an "extra-ecclesiastical environment". Rickey goes on to say of "The World" that "the scene lies in secular history,"[5] and while this is partly true it is important for the better understanding of this poem to realise that the scene lies also in Biblical history.

As with the majority of Herbert's poems, the fundamental idea of "The World" is easily grasped, and this holds true even for the twentieth century reader unfamiliar with Christianity. Herbert's method is often deliberately parabolic;[6] he fully subscribes to

Sidney's maxim that literature should "teach and delight." The opening of The Church-porch makes his intention clear,

> Thou, whose sweet youth and early hopes inhance
> Thy rate and price, and mark thee for a treasure;
> Hearken unto a Verser, who may chance
> Ryme thee to good, and make a bait of pleasure.
> A verse may finde him, who a sermon flies,
> And turn delight into a sacrifice. (1-6)

Christ's own way of teaching naturally commends itself to Herbert, and he urges it on his fellow clergymen in A Priest to the Temple:

> Our Saviour made plants and seeds to teach the people; for he was the true householder, who bringeth out of his treasure things new and old; the old things of Philosophy, and the new of Grace; and maketh the one serve the other. And I conceive, our Saviour did this for three reasons; first, that by familiar things he might make his Doctrine slip the more easily into the heart even of the meanest. Secondly, that labouring people (whom he chiefly considered) might have everywhere monuments of his Doctrine, remembering in gardens, his mustard-seed, and lillyes; in the field, his seed-corn, and tares; and so be not drowned altogether in the works of their vocation, but sometimes lift up their minds to better things, even in the midst of their pains. Thirdly, that he might set a Copy for Parsons.[7]

Herbert has no hesitation about using the same method in his poetry as we see when we examine "The World." The story outline is simple to the extreme, carried and dominated as it is by the major architectural image. A house is built by Love, but Fortune, Pleasure and Sinne meddle with the building in progressively more detrimental ways, although each of their destructive ploys is foiled in turn by Wisdome, laws and proclamations, and Grace. In the end, Sinne joins forces with Death to destroy the building completely, only to have Love and Grace combine with Glorie and rebuild "a braver Palace then before" (20). This apparently simple allegory is much more complex

than it first appears, and exemplifies parabolic teaching as Patrides defines it,

> Prompt understanding of the central point is essential; but because the parable is fundamentally an indirect discourse, total understanding is reserved for those qualified to respond. It might therefore be said of Herbert's poetry what a Biblical scholar has asserted of parabolic teaching, that it possesses a complexity within apparent simplicity. [8]

Few readers would have any difficulty with an allegorical interpretation of this poem, especially if they were reading it in conjunction with Herbert's other work.[9] Throughout The Temple God is readily identified as "Love". He is sometimes personified, as in "Love I," "Immortal Love, authour of this great frame," (1) or love is named as his most important attribute as in "Even-song," "My God thou art all love" (29). In the former poem "Love's" activity on man's behalf is clearly stated-- it "Wrought our deliverance from the infernall pit" (12). In "The World" Love accomplishes essentially the same task, and the allegory can be so understood, even if the full theological import of Grace is missed.

The title of the poem would probably first suggest the secular or material world, since the twentieth century has largely forgotten the Elizabethan system of correspondences. But a study of The Temple as a whole serves to clarify Herbert's choice. A reading of "Man" sheds light on "The World," "Oh mightie love! Man is one world, and hath/ Another to attend him" (47-48). "The World" as a title can be seen to embrace the cosmos as well as the terrestrial globe, mankind and his many activities. It was such a familiar concept to the seventeenth century as to be accepted without thought. In The Elizabethan World Picture, E. M. W. Tillyard enlarges on the idea,

> The Pythagoreans dwelt on man's unique comprehensiveness: he contained in himself samples of all the degrees of creation, excelling in this not only beasts but the angels, who were entirely spiritual beings. But it was not only a matter of including in himself these samples: man's very anatomy corresponded with the physical ordering of the universe. His frame was compounded of the four elements, and on the same principles as was the sublunary world. [10]

Mary Ellen Rickey has shown that Herbert's titles are always significant,[11] and the care with which he selected them can be deduced from the number he altered. "Poetry," for instance, became "The Quidditie;" "Invention" was given the enigmatical title "Jordan II"; "The Second Thanksgiving" was renamed "The Reprisal," and "Prayer" became "Church-lock and key." Each new title is more apt and pertinent to the subject matter of the poem, and perhaps this can be seen most clearly in "The Elixir," which was originally called "Perfection." Herbert made extensive revisions to this poem in his own handwriting, and added the new title without deleting the old, presumably after the alterations.[12] With a radically altered fourth stanza and a new final stanza, the fresh title subtly harmonizes the philosopher stone metaphor with Christian service and communion. The introduction of the architectural imagery in the philosopher stone metaphor gives the poem such added dimensions of meaning that it is completely transformed and lifted from the mediocrity of the W version:

> All may of thee partake:
> Nothing can be so mean,
> Which with this tincture (for thy sake)
> Will not grow bright and clean.
>
> This is the famous stone
> That turneth all to gold:
> For that which God doth touch and own
> Cannot for lesse be told. (17-24)

Many of Herbert's titles are, of course, perfectly straightforward, and carry no hidden allusions. In poems like "Affliction," "Grace," "Love," "Holy Baptism," "The Holy Communion," and "The Holy Scriptures" the content is closely related to the title. Church feasts are celebrated in verse, and titled accordingly -- "Lent," "Easter," "Whitsuntide" and "Christmas." The Church building itself is often a concrete starting point for the poet's meditation -- "The Churche-floore," "Church monuments" and "The Windows." Yet the reader of Herbert tends to remember those titles which intrigue and puzzle, such as "The Collar" which can be punned choler or caller and all three related to the content of the poem, though none is mentioned directly.[13] But perhaps none of Herbert's titles has given rise to more speculation than "Jordan" I and "Jordan" II, poems dealing with poetry as an art, yet tantalisingly difficult to elucidate. It is evident that Herbert chooses to make his titles transparent or obscure as he feels will best suit the subject matter of his poem. "The World" is obviously ambiguous, but it is a playful ambiguity that would have been immediately apparent to his first readers: man as microcosm and the universe as macrocosm was, as E. M. W. Tillyard says, "the supreme commonplace."[14] As this short poem is considered in depth we find that "The World" as a title expands to fill almost every possible meaning of the word. This is due in no small measure to its close integration with the architectural imagery since they work well together to generate a profusion of ideas.

The poem opens with the succinct statement, "Love built a stately house" (1) which immediately conjures up another seventeenth

century commonplace:

> Love built a stately house; where Fortune came,
> And spinning phansies, she was heard to say,
> That her fine cobwebs did support the frame,
> Whereas they were supported by the same:
> But Wisdome quickly swept them all away. (1-5)

Mediaeval iconography frequently depicted God as the Great Architect presiding over the universe with a pair of callipers in his hand. Until the early seventeenth century the role of the architect was not clearly differentiated from that of master builder, and God as master builder is a familiar Biblical image, "he that built all things is God" (Heb. 3.4). Herbert uses the same image in "The Church-floore", "Blest be the Architect, whose art/ Could build so strong in a weak heart" (19-20), and, indeed, the creative powers of the divine Artificer are implicit throughout The Temple. Joseph Summers says:

> Within most of the individual poems the emphasis is on construction rather than pilgrimage. Herbert's imagery characteristically concerns the creator and the architect rather than the 'nests' and 'tears' of Crashaw; the 'light' of Vaughan, or Donne's imagery of death...He is almost everywhere the builder or the artist or the musician. [15]

That Herbert conceives the house as "stately" is indication of his acceptance of the doctrine that the creation, despite the Fall, retains a certain beauty and nobility, and man himself, the crown of creation, bears the recognisable though distorted image of his creator. This is a view the poet reiterates in "Man," as he poses the rhetorical question, "What house more stately hath there been/ Or can be then is Man?" (4-5). In "The World" Herbert follows his

initial terse statement with one of the pregnant pauses that is characteristic of his work, and follows it with a surprising turn of thought "where Fortune came." Helen Vendler says in The Poetry of George Herbert:

> One of the particular virtues of Herbert's poetry is its provisional quality. His poems are ready at any moment to change direction or to modify attitudes. Even between the title and the first line, Herbert may rethink his position. There are lines in which the nominal experiences or subjects have suffered a sea-change, so that the poem we think we are reading turns into something quite other. [16]

The two familiar images of man as microcosm and God as Architect would prepare the seventeenth century reader for some further elaboration on these commonplaces, such as a reference to Eden, Satan, or the Fall. Instead, the reference is to another commonplace, the pagan deity Fortune, and the reaction is naturally surprise and suspense.

The portrayal of Fortune as the first intruder supports Rickey's contention that this poem is about secular history, for if it were dealing solely with Biblical history, as the opening phrase suggests, the logical first intruder would be Sinne. Herbert's use of classical materials in his English poems is sparing, although Rickey has demonstrated that it is more extensive than earlier critics had supposed:

> To overlook the classical materials in The Temple is, I am convinced, to miss an important part of Herbert's effort to enlist all of his mental resources in the service and praise of God. One element of these resources was his knowledge of the life and art of the ancients; this, he used as tellingly as he did his familiarity with the English Church, the natural world, or the teachings of the Fathers. [17]

It would be strange if Herbert had not made use of classical materials, immersed as he was in the study of Greek and Latin at Westminster School, London, and Trinity College, Cambridge. Classical ideas must have been so thoroughly ingrained in his consciousness as to have had a very considerable influence on his thinking. The fact that he uses so few classical allusions in The Temple compared with his Latin verse suggests that the restraint is deliberate, which makes his occasional use, as in "The World," all the more significant. When Rickey states that Herbert's references to the Gordian knot in "Divinitie" and Echo in "Heaven" are "the only such names in The Church-porch and The Church"[18] she has overlooked this one in "The World", although in her earlier discussion of the poem she says "Herbert initiates the ephemeral pageantry of "The World" by assessing the effect of the Roman goddess Fortuna armed with her wheel."[19] In the early seventeenth century, despite the Reformation, Fortune's unpredictable sway over the affairs of men was still a favourite theme in literature and the visual arts -- so thoroughly had the Middle Ages integrated her into their syncretic scheme of the universe -- although as C. S. Lewis remarks:

> Their cosmology and their religion were not such easy bedfellows as might be supposed...The Pagan elements embedded in it involved a conception of God, and of man's place in the universe, which if not in logical contradiction to Christianity, were subtly out of harmony with it.[20]

It is Herbert's view, too, that the operations of Providence and chance are basically incompatible. He says of Fortune's cobwebs, "Wisdome quickly swept them all away"(5), for her brash assertion that they support the framework of the building is ludicrous when

they scarcely disguise it.[21] Love's handiwork cannot be disguised, as the apostle Paul wrote to the Romans:

> For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; (Rom. 1.20)

Fortune's "phansies" and "fine cobwebs" cannot alter or harm the fabric of the building in any way, although they may disfigure it temporarily.

The general sense of the stanza implies that the attempt to curry favour with the capricious goddess may be the temptation of the young who are given to "phansies." In The Church-porch Herbert uses a similar metaphor as he advises the young man on how best to protect his good name, "If that thy fame with ev'ry toy be pos'd/Tis a thinne webbe, which poysonous fancies make"(223-4). An ambitious young man has worldly preferment as his goal, and his natural inclination may be to ascribe success to Fortune rather than Providence. The "Wisdome" of riper years will brush away both worldly ambition and success as being relatively trivial and unimportant in the larger scheme of life. But "Wisdome" is also the prerogative of classical philosophers. The ancient writers with whom Herbert was so well acquainted were only too often sceptical of Fortune's role in the affairs of men. The poet, therefore, allows the ambiguity of "Wisdome" to lend itself to several interpretations. It can be seen as the "Wisdome" of age or the "Wisdome" of the classical philosophers as they sweep away the idea that life is governed by chance. As the "Wisdome" of Providence it can also be construed as mild criticism of the prevalent notions about Fortunes' machinations in Herbert's own day and age. The playful

gentleness of the admonition is reminiscent of his criticism of the Petrarchan poets in "Jordan" I whose "fictions" and "false hair" he has no desire either to emulate or proscribe, "Shepherds are honest people, let them sing" (11).

One of Herbert's most attractive qualities is this sane, level-headed approach to human problems, and his preference for the everyday metaphor seems to be part of it. The unpretentiousness of the architectural imagery in "The World" shows the poet anxious to use plain figures, while at the same time he expends all his training and talent in an effort to infuse them with the freshness and vitality that makes such an impact on the reader. He takes no untoward pride in this, for he sees any talent as a trust, to be used to God's glory, "Lord, my first fruits present themselves to thee;/Yet not mine neither: for from thee they came,/And must return." Rosemund Tuve says it is the "humility which gives such an endearing sweetness to Herbert's voice that it is not possible to read the poet without loving the man."[22] This is surely because his art is always subordinate to the truth as he sees it, for Herbert offers no compromise on those things which he deems to be of paramount importance to himself and others. In "To all Angels and Saints" those who are "glorious spirits," including the Virgin Mary, cannot be venerated since it would take away from his Master's privilege, "...our King,/Whom we do joyntly adore and praise,/Bids no such thing" (16-18). But, plain Scriptural injunctions apart, the poet will set up no rules to govern the minutiae of others' daily lives. Christian liberty for Herbert is a reality, although he is always careful that it should not be license.

Unlike Herrick who took frank pleasure in the unashamed pagan pleasures of the countryside, and wrote of them with such candour and delight, Herbert can only be a "Lover of Old Customes, if they be good and harmlesse" [23] but, "If there be any ill in the customs, that may be severed from the good, he [the country parson] pares the apple and gives them the clean to feed on." This advice strikes the reader as eminently sensible and reasonable, as does the poet's stance in "The World." Herbert chooses to emphasise the role of Providence in the affairs of men instead of railing at the commonly held notions about Fortune which are at variance with the workings of Providence. "Wisdome" works to fulfil God's plan, while Fortune's efforts to frustrate it are portrayed as ineffectual, and even somewhat comical. Fortune's portrait is merely etched in bare outline, but with such skill that the starkness of the image leaves the imagination free to round it out with every variety of human thought on the vagaries of the goddess. This whittling down of an image to its essentials is typical of Herbert's style and its integration with the controlling architectural imagery enables it to achieve extraordinary symbolic force.[24]

In the second stanza, Pleasure, unlike Fortune, does have a detrimental effect on Love's "stately house." Here Herbert resorts to a greater use of architectural imagery to carry his allegorical ideas a step further by using some of the features of architecture. The house which is so "stately" is envisaged as lacking the ornament that was still dear to the hearts of some of the poet's contemporaries. The German influence on English architecture which became so widespread in Elizabeth's reign along with the increase in trade had manifested

itself in extravagent ornamental facades. T. D. Atkinson says:

> At their best their designs are heavy and overloaded with meaningless ornaments; at their worst they are very hideous. 25

Despite the influence of Inigo Jones and the newer trend towards a more severe classical style Elizabethan flamboyance was only gradually dying out in Herbert's lifetime. The poet's own preference is clear as he depicts Pleasure's detrimental effect on the austere design of Love's "stately house",

> Then Pleasure came, who, liking not the fashion,
> Began to make Balcones, Terraces,
> Till she had weakened all by alteration:
> But rev'rend laws and many a proclamation
> Reformed all at length with menaces.(6-10)

The building has not been designed to take the weight of all the excrescences, so its very existence is threatened.

The allegorical meaning comes through plainly. A life devoted to pleasure whether at the individual or national level leads to downfall, for the Pleasure the poet has in mind is obviously not the legitimate sort that is engendered by an appreciation of, say, "Church-musick,""... and in your house of Pleasure/A dainty lodging me assign'd"(3-4). Church music is licit pleasure to be contrasted with the selfish variety which Herbert calls "the wrangler" in "Obedience." In another poem with the arresting title "Dotage" he portrays the pleasure that can be "...the folly of distracted men" (13):

> False glozing pleasures, casks of happinesse,
> Foolish night-fires, womens and childrens wishes,
> Chases in Arras, guilded emptinesse,
> Shadows well mounted, dreams in a career,
> Embroider'd lyes, nothing between two dishes;
> These are the pleasures here. (1-6)

Pleasure in "The World" alters Love's stately house for a whim, "liking not the fashion," and her additions are meaningless, since they are mere adjuncts to the structure. Nevertheless, they disfigure and weaken it. The wiles of "false glozing Pleasures" distract men from God's service and require stern legislation to keep them in check, "But rev'rend laws, and many a proclamation/Reformed all at length with menaces" (9-10). It is apparent here that Herbert shared the widely-held seventeenth century conviction that the ruler of the nation is responsible for legislating and enforcing not only secular, but moral law.

In the first stanza "Wisdome" implies the answer of the classical world to life's perplexities; now "rev'rend laws, and many a proclamation" point to the Law and the Prophets. The "Balcones, Terraces," suggest the additions to the law which eventually almost nullified it, while the protruding qualities of the "Balcones" and the obtrusiveness of "Terraces" bring to mind Israel's propensity to go her own way. Taken together, they can be seen to describe the state of tension which existed throughout the Old Testament between God and his Chosen People. God had revealed his will and given his law to Israel, and this was reflected in the social order. Yet the actual record is one of continuous disharmony between the revealed will of God and the state of affairs in society.[26] From the time the theocracy was established the tendency to fragmentation was an ever-present danger, "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judg. 21.25). The Israelites' pursuit of pleasure included dabbling in polytheistic magic, divination and demons, in direct opposition to the law, and at the same time there was blatant neglect of justice and mercy.[27]

The consequent thunderings of the prophets was followed by more rigid application of law until by New Testament times the "Balcones" and "Terraces" were often regarded as being of more importance than the house itself, causing Christ to say "Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness"(Luke 11.39).

But some reformation had been achieved over the centuries, for the Jews had resolutely turned their backs on the polytheism of the nations around them. Herbert gives some indication of this in the last line where the "...rev'rend laws, and many a proclamation" act to "reform" Love's "stately house." The play on the word "reform" neatly contributes to "laws" and "proclamations" as well as the architectural image. The W version has "Quickly reformed all"[28] and the revision "Reformed all at length" is not only more euphonious, but more exact in its application to Jewish history. It demonstrates again Herbert's ability to make changes which sharpen the point of his verse and deepen the meaning. "At length" gives a better idea of the eventual reformation and the time span taken to accomplish it. The second stanza thus ends on an optimistic note, albeit a guarded one. The reader is left with the impression that the first two intruders have been dealt with satisfactorily, but in the case of Pleasure the outcome is a shade uncertain. The word "menaces," particularly, is a jarring one; it seems that a continual threat is required to hold Pleasure in check.

The third culprit to interfere with Love's "stately house" differs from Pleasure and Fortune in that he has the potential to destroy the whole edifice:

> Then enter'd Sinne, and with that Sycomore,
> Whose leaves first sheltred man from drought & dew,
> Working and winding slily evermore,
> The inward walls and sommers cleft and tore:
> But Grace shor'd these, and cut that as it grew. (11-15)

Fortune's cobwebs and Pleasure's additions have been apparent to the beholder, but Sinne's wily attack is invisible from the outside. His depredations could escape the eyes of a not very vigilant householder for years, going unnoticed perhaps until the whole building came crashing down about his ears. Herbert has again chosen to elaborate on certain architectural features of the house as he describes the havoc Sinne wreakes on the inner walls and beams, and he has combined this imagery with that of the malignant growth of the sycomore to good effect. The reader who has been holding in abeyance expectations derived from the title and opening phrase is now to have these satisfied, for the focus is now primarily on mankind as a whole. This is a reversal of the emphasis in the foregoing two stanzas which seem to refer first to the individual, then to classical and Judaic cultures and lastly to mankind in general.

Sinne's instrument of destruction is the Sycomore, "Whose leaves first sheltred man from drought and dew"(12) -- a direct reference to Eden. Hutchinson says the "Sycomore was considered by mistaken etymology, to be a species of fig-tree."[29] The statement in the poem that the leaves provided man with shelter is clearly ironic. The first parents' sin of disobedience led them to a knowledge of good and evil. As Herbert says in "Home," man is he, "...who would not at a feast/Leave one poore apple for thy love?"(21-22). The consequence of sin was death and a severance of fellowship between man and God. Adam and Eve

immediately knew that they required covering to shield themselves in the presence of a holy God. In the previous poem, "Sighs and Grones," Herbert uses the Edenic imagery, "...my lust/Hath still sow'd fig-leaves to exclude thy light" (15-16). Until Man was actually expelled from Eden he required no protection from "drought and dew." Only after the natural creation was cursed along with man, "cursed is the ground for thy sake" (Gen. 3.17), did Adam and Eve require protection from the hostile elements. Genesis records, "...the Lord God made coats of skin and clothed them" (Gen. 3.21). Man's consciousness of the unbridgeable gulf between himself and a holy God is the subject of "Sighs and Grones." This poem portrays man's helplessness in sin and pleads for mercy on the grounds of Christ's sacrifice:

> O Do not use me
> After my sinnes! look not on
> my desert,
> But on thy glorie! then thou wilt reform
> And not refuse me: for thou onely art
> The mightie God, but I a sillie worm;
> O do not bruise me! (1-6)

Herbert reinforces the allusion to Eden and the Fall in the third line of the stanza by superimposing the natural on the architectural image; "Working and winding slily evermore/The inward walls and sommers cleft and tore" (13-14). The image is one of a vine's tortuous growth as it twists its branches around the beams and throughout the inner fabric of the house, and the diction conjures up the movement of a serpent in the words "working" and "winding." The sound /sl/ in "Slily" links it with similar sounding words which have unpleasant connotations --slick, slide, slimy, slink, slippery and slither-- all of which are often unconsciously associated with reptiles

(notwithstanding the fact that these creatures feel dry and are not unpleasant to touch). So the choice of "slily" in its sound and meaning works to remind the reader of Eve's temptation by Satan in the form of the serpent which was "more subtil than any beast of the field" (Gen. 3.1). The Biblical references to snakes are almost entirely related to evil, the exception being the brazen serpent in the wilderness: "Make thee a fiery Serpent, and set it upon a pole, and it shall come to pass, that every one who is bitten, when he looketh upon it shall live." (Num. 21.8). This Old Testament incident is taken up by Christ and applied to himself, "And, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3.14). In Revelation, the serpent's identification with Satan is quite specific, "...that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan" (Rev. 12.9), and mediaeval iconography frequently depicts Satan as a serpent coiled around the globe, representing the sinful nature of mankind.[30]

The ambiguity of the title "The World" works particularly well in this third stanza as it combines with the over-riding architectural metaphor and its complementary characteristics. The portrayal of Sinne and the ubiquitous Sycomore quietly and systematically demolishing Love's "stately house" from within clearly indicates the fallen state of both the human and natural creations, while insisting on the presence of a demonic element. The stanza suggests that the chief characteristic of Sinne, Satan's ally, is subtlety. Early Christians were warned of this by the apostle Paul, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the Serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should

be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor. 11.3). Herbert expresses Sinne and Satan's ongoing enmity against man along with man's ever present tendency to sin in the word "evermore". In "Sinnes round" this endless propensity towards sin is described more fully and with unerring accuracy, "My thoughts are working like a busy flame,/Untill their cockatrice they hatch and bring" (3-4). It is interesting to see in this poem how he unites another classical allusion with a Biblical idea. "Cockatrice" is particularly apt in its reference to the basilisk, that mythical reptile hatched by a serpent from a cock's egg,and the image successfully blends man's and Satan's respective roles.

Sinne's destructive power has ravaged Love's "stately house," and the sudden appearance of Grace can mitigate but not obliterate the damage. Grace works to prevent the collapse of the building by propping up the walls and beams, besides putting a stop to the further growth of the deadly Sycomore. It enables Love's house to stand, its outward appearance not too changed, but inwardly presenting a sorry sight with its crooked walls, sagging floors and bulging ceilings. The implied architectural imagery of a ruined interior effectively conveys Sinne's deadly potential. When it is taken in conjunction with the ideas inherent in the first two stanzas the reader realises that Sinne can destroy not only the individual or the ordered corporate life of a civilisation, but the relationship between a Chosen People and their God. Only the operation of Grace prevents utter chaos within the economy of God's providential care for his creation, and is the manifestation of Christ's atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world. Herbert's orthodox theology is apparent here

and in his other poems but also finds more complete exposition in his prose writings, particularly A Priest to the Temple. He firmly adheres to the Protestant position on Scriptural authority as "The Holy Scriptures" I and II show. In his "Briefe Notes on Valdesso's Considerations, and a Letter to the Translator" Herbert warmly commends much in the work. He says that Valdesso is "a true servant of God"[31] but directs some criticisms against what he sees as the Spanish theologian's imperfect recognition of Scriptural authority. He does not hesitate to condemn this in round terms; "his opinion of the scripture is unsufferable."

Herbert's orthodoxy did not lead him to rigid moralizing. Like Chaucer's Parson "...Christes loove and his apostles twelve/He taught, but first he folwed it hymselve."[32] In an age of theological controversy he stood apart, and even in his youthful spirited response to Andrew Melville's criticism of the English Universities he takes issue with him only in the matter of ritual. He recognises that they have more in common as Protestant fellow believers than differences over ritual observance.[33] Such an attitude is not really so surprising, for, as Helen White says, it was only this question which then divided Anglican and Puritan:

> The English Church still officially accepted the main tenets of continental Protestantism, Justification by Faith, Predestination and Election, and the reliance on Scripture as the final authority.[34]

It is impossible to say how Herbert would have reacted to Archbishop Laud's desire for conformity, for he died five months before Laud was elevated to the Canterbury see, but his attitude to Puritans in his own congregation was one of love and toleration.[35]

Herbert's view, then, of how God's Grace is operative in the fallen creation is directly derived from the continental Protestant position, and the fact that it comes through so plainly, especially in the third stanza of "The World", is due in large measure to the simplicity and directness of the imagery, particularly in the architectural metaphors. As the associate of Love, Grace exhibits the same concern for the state of the house. As an inanimate object the house itself can obviously do nothing either to deserve Love's care, or avoid Sinne's depredations. It exists because Love chose to build it, and its state of repair is entirely dependent on Love's good offices. The architectural image figures most precisely the relationship of the believer to the covenant of Grace according to the orthodox Protestant view. Joseph Summers says:

> Every grace is the gift of God, even the grace to acknowledge our gracelessness;...The essential 'act' is that the individual should abandon the pretence that he <u>can</u> act in any way pertaining to salvation: he must experience the full realisation that salvation belongs to God, that nothing he can do either by faith or works can help.[36]

This is a theme that runs all through Herbert's poetry and it is made even more explicit in a poem like "Dialogue":

> But as I can see no merit,
> Leading to this favour:
> So the way to fit me for it
> Is beyond my savour.
> As the reason then is thine;
> So the way is none of mine:
> I disclaim the whole designe:
> Sinne disclaims and I resigne. (17-24)

The burden of the third stanza of "The World" is essentially that of <u>The Church</u> as a whole. It portrays the paradoxical situation

of the Christian believer in whom Grace and Sinne are both present. The apostle Paul wrote that "the just shall live by faith" (Rom.1.17), and he went on to explain that the believer who has placed his faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour is freed from both the law and sin in God's eyes and can be thought of as a new creation (Rom. 4.24 - 6.23). But he is still mortal and experiences a tug-of-war within himself, "...the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Gal. 5.17). Man's natural inclination as a descendant of Adam is towards the egocentricity which the Bible calls "the old nature" or "the flesh" or "the old man" and it is continually at variance with the indwelling Holy Spirit which impels him to please God rather than himself. This "dying unto self" is often an agonising experience, as The Church shows, but the Christian must persevere in the task of subduing the "old nature" while cultivating the new. Rosemund Tuve has commented that "Herbert's Jordans never stayed crossed"[37] and the reason they cannot is the ongoing nature of the struggle which New Testament writers often present in the image of warfare.[38] Nevertheless, the Christian is to consider himself "dead indeed unto sin but alive unto God" (Rom. 6.11), and Herbert devotes his next short poem, "Colossians 3.3 Our life is hid with Christ in God," to an acrostic portrayal of a text he thought important enough to have painted next to his wife's pew in Bemerton Church.[39] It is both a hieroglyph and exposition of the duality of the Christian experience:

MY words & thoughts do both expresse this notion,
That LIFE hath with the sun a double motion.
The first IS straight, and our diurnall friend,
The other HID and doth obliquely bend.
One life is wrapt IN flesh, and tends to earth:
The other winds towards HIM, whose happie birth
Taught me to live here so, THAT still one eye
Should aim and shoot at that which IS on high:
Quitting with daily labour all MY pleasure,
To gain at harvest an eternall TREASURE.

The vein of Platonic thought in this poem as the flesh "tends to earth" while "The other winds towards HIM" strengthens the connection with "The World." The intruders Fortune and Pleasure have been seen allegorically to have a detrimental effect on the individual, and, on another level, Fortune checked by Wisdome has obvious application to the classical world and the Platonic and Aristotelian thought so often in harmony with Christian teaching. Pleasure held in check by "laws" and "proclamations" refers to Jewish history, but, with Fortune, foreshadows Sinne's more successful attempt to take over Love's "stately house." And these ever-widening circles of meaning within the five apparently simple lines of the third stanza are derived mainly from the successful blending of natural and architectural imagery with the dramatic interplay of the personified abstractions on "The World." Sinne's action on "The World" is primarily directed against man, but can be expanded to include the wider world of Church, nation, and classical civilizations, as well as the people of the Old Covenant. Herbert's prophetic awareness of the cumulative effect of sin on church or nation -- the secular state being still almost synonomous with the Church in his day -- can be adduced from a reading of The Church Militant. This long poem which constitutes the last third of The Temple is not a happy expression of Herbert's poetic art,

but since he allowed it to stand from the W manuscript along with The Church-porch --both in the same place --it has to be reckoned with in any serious consideration of The Temple as a whole.

Satan's machinations are implicit in many poems in The Church, although mentioned directly in only a few.[40] In The Church Militant Herbert reverts to a figure even more familiar than the traditional architectural metaphor to depict the struggle of the Church against Satan as an all-out war. Sinne and Satan are confederates, bringing about the near demise of the Christian Church, just as is so succinctly implied by the architectural and natural images in the third stanza of "The World." As the Church spread westward Sinne was at its heels, "Sinne did set out of Eastern Babylon/And travell'd westward also" (103-104). The Reformation is seen by Herbert as retarding, but not halting, Sinne's inexorable progress:

> The second Temple could not reach the first
> And the late reformation never durst
> Compare with ancient times and purer years. (225-227)

Herbert's disillusionment was shared by many. The Reformation had brought wars to Europe in the preceding century, and even as Herbert was writing the Thirty Years War was raging on the continent. For all his many shortcomings as a ruler James I earnestly tried to keep Britain out of this conflict, and Marchette Chute says:

> Few Englishmen shared this love of peace, but one of the few was George Herbert. His hatred of war is curious in a man who came from a long line of soldiers. Yet he went so far as to write a Latin poem called "The Triumph of Death" in which he bitterly traced the growing savagery of "red slaughter" through the ages until it culminated in the invention of gunpowder. [41]

The wanton waste and destruction of war is anathema to those like Herbert who have an instinctive appreciation of a creative, constructive social order, seeing in it an analogy to the work of the Divine Architect. His preference for architectural imagery reflects some of his most deeply felt convictions. But if few Englishmen were as peaceable as Herbert, many shared his love of the English language and an Anglican Church which had not abandoned the hierarchical principle. For George Herbert, hierarchy is a reflection of the ordered universe which has its origin in the mind of its divine Artificer. "The British Church" was almost certainly written after The Church Militant and shows the poet's great affection for his own communion. It is depicted as pursuing a middle path between the overdressed Roman Church and its opposite extreme, the Presbyterian Church whose "hair doth lie/About her ears":

> But dearest Mother, what those misse,
> The mean, thy praise and glory is,
> And long may be,
> Blessed be God, whose love it was
> To double-moat thee with his grace,
> And none but thee. (25-30)

Herbert's love for the Anglican Church does not prevent the solemn verdict in The Church Militant, "Religion stands tiptoe in our land/Readie to pass to the American strand" (235-6). Walton records the annoyance of the Vice Chancellor of Cambridge University with these unpatriotic sentiments and his demand that the offending lines be removed. Nicholas Ferrar, Herbert's trusted friend and literary executor, "would by no means allow the Book to be printed without them." [42] This incident suggests the degree of confidence

that may be placed in the 1633 edition of The Temple as conforming to Herbert's wishes. Ferrar was Herbert's "exceeding dear brother" in Christ Jesus, and knew very well that the poet was neither a pessimist nor iconoclast, but rather a well-educated Christian realist who could discern the lessons in secular, Jewish and Church history and apply them to the contemporary situation, as he does so plainly in "The World." We find that the summation of Herbert's views is conveyed through the tightly compressed images. The destructive activities of Fortune, Pleasure and Sinne against Love's "stately house" sketch what world and church history have been, and inevitably will be until the end of time. The architectural image of a structure undermined from within most effectively promulgates Herbert's position.

Sinne is inevitably linked with judgment and death. Despite the good offices of Grace in temporarily shoring up Love's "stately house" Death intervenes. Together, Death and Sinne are invincible and it seems that Grace must stand by and watch as they triumph:

> Then Sinne combin'd with Death in a firm band
> To raze the building to the very floore:
> Which they effected, none could them withstand.
> But Love and Grace took Glorie by the hand,
> And built a braver Palace than before. (16-20)

The penalty for the original sin in Eden was death. Adam and Eve were warned that to disobey the one restriction would have a disastrous consequence, "for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 3:17). In the New Testament Paul talks not merely of physical death, but "the second death"-- eternal separation from God-- "For the wages of sin is death," but the apostle goes on to

affirm, "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). In "Businesse" Herbert expresses the same thought, "If he had not liv'd for thee,/Thou hadst di'd most wretchedly;/And two deaths had been thy fee" (20-22).

The unholy alliance of Sinne and Death is called "a firm Band", which suggests their confederacy along with the physical properties of shackles or fetters strong enough to encompass the house and pull it down. The word "raze" gives the impression of complete demolition which is slightly mitigated by "to the very floore." Herbert could have said "to the very ground". The use of "floore" conveys, instead, some idea of Christ's involvement with the house. In "The Sacrifice" Herbert uses "raze" and "floore" in a similar architectural metaphor, "Some said that I the Temple to the Floore/In three days raz'd, and raised as before" (65-66). Later in the same poem Christ says, "I am the floore, the sink, where they it fling" (175), and although the first meaning suggests the degradation and humiliation of Christ, the irony of the entire poem, and the fact that the reference comes after a stanza in which Christ calls himself "the rock from whence all store/Of heav'nly blessings issue evermore" (170-171) also implies that there is that which remains indestructible if Christ the Rock is the foundation.

However, as Sinne and Death combine to destroy Love's "stately house" the title "The World" takes on yet a further shade of meaning. In "Self-condemnation" Herbert exposes the dangers of "The World" which have been hinted at throughout the allegory:

He that doth love, and love amisse
This worlds delights before true Christian joy,
Hath made a Jewish choice:
The world an ancient murderer is;
Thousands of souls it hath and doth destroy
With her enchanting voice.(7-12)

Physical death is, of course, the inevitable destiny of man; as the Psalmist says, "What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death?" (Ps. 89:48). The phrase "none could them withstand" conveys the sense of its inevitability. But Death allied with Sinne threatens more than physical annihilation. Were it not for the operation of Grace it would mean eternal separation from Love. The picture is indeed black, with Love's "stately house" utterly ruined, but quite suddenly the seeming victory of Sinne and Death is turned to defeat, for Love re-enters the action, "But Love and Grace took Glorie by the hand,/And built a braver palace than before" (19-20).

The W manuscript reads "Love took Grace & Glory by the hand."[43] In this later version the association of Love with Grace leaves only Glorie to be taken, like a child, "by the hand." The W version could more easily be interpreted as the Trinity. It would be possible to identify Love as God the Father, Grace as the Holy Spirit, and Glorie as the Lord Jesus Christ. In the immediately preceding poem "Sighs and Grones" Herbert has used "glorie" as a reference for Christ and the Atonement, "...look not on my desert,/but on thy glorie!" (2-5). The glory of Yahweh in the Old Testament "denotes the revelation of God's being, nature and presence to mankind, sometimes with physical phenomena."[44] In the New Testament glory's "chief use is to describe the revelation and presence of God in the

Person and work of Jesus Christ. He is the outshining of the divine glory." Herbert probably has the Trinity in mind, but the alteration from W and the suggestion of a childlike Glorie has a second interpretation. The Bible also uses "glory" to depict man created in the image and glory of God, destined for a special relationship with him, the restoration of which is the purpose of Christ's coming. The image of Love and Grace as they take Glorie "by the hand" could imply a raising up from the dead-- Glorie could be the name of Love's "stately house"-- the "World" in microcosm. Herbert's changes are always meaningful, and in this instance a slight, seeming innocuous coupling of Love with Grace to take "Glorie by the hand" lends even more weight to the metaphor and emphasises the "braver Palace" as the resurrected body of the believer. However, "the braver Palace" in its association with all the meanings of "The World" can be a reference to the parousia and the restoration of the material universe and the Church triumphant. The simple statement "And built a braver Palace then before," recalls the magnificence of St. John the Divine's vision:

> And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away: and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband..... for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said. Behold, I make all things new. (Rev. 21.1-5)

Like the Apostle Paul, Herbert believed that the Jewish nation, too, would be finally restored to God's favour, "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should

be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved" (Rom.11.25). The apostle's love and concern for his own people was such that he was willing to relinquish his own salvation if it meant that they would be saved. Herbert's poignant poem "The Jews" reveals the same anxiety that God's Chosen People should enter into the inheritance that was promised first to them:

> Poore nation, whose sweet sap and juice
> Our cyens have purloin'd, and left you drie:
> Whose streams we got by the Apostles sluce,
> And use in baptisme, while ye pine and die:
> Who by not keeping once, became a debter;
> And now by keeping lose the letter:
>
> Oh that my prayers! mine alas!
> Oh that some Angel might a trumpet sound;
> At which the Church falling upon her face
> Should crie so loud, untill the trump were drown'd,
> And by that crie of her deare Lord obtain,
> That your sweet sap might come again!

There is a suggestion of parousia in "...some Angel might a trumpet sound" that links it to the thought in "The World." It is a poem full of hope, suggesting as it does that "The World" as it presently exists with all its imperfections will eventually be "Reformed" to its original blueprint. With its traditional architectural imagery "The World" on one level appears to be a very simple allegorical poem; to probe deeper is to find it fraught with some of the great doctrines of the Christian Church. As Mary Rickey says, Herbert's purpose is "to divest Heaven of any shred of exoticism,"[45] and so there is a homeliness and matter-of-factness in this poem that the familiar architectural imagery promotes and sustains, and which,

indeed, makes Love's activities readily comprehensible, reaching him "who a sermon flies." The serried layers of meaning in the poem encompass man's worldly activities, Jewish and classical history, and most importantly, the Biblical plan for man's redemption in Christ. The hint of Jewish history measures the law and the prophets against Grace, and so relates the Synagogue to the Temple of the Christian believer and Church which the third poem "Sion" takes up in more detail.

Footnotes

[1]This inner conflict which pervades most of the poems in The Church is the norm of Christian experience outlined by the apostle Paul in Romans 7.19-25, the key verse being "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do" (10).

[2]Vendler, p. 8.

[3]The Williams Manuscript of George Herbert's Poems (New York, 1977), has an extensive and scholarly discussion of both the probable dating and tripartite division of The Temple in the introduction by Amy M. Charles. I had the privilege of examining this manuscript, formerly known as M S Jones B62, now 109H29, in Dr. Williams Library, Gordon Square, London, and observing Herbert's own corrections to some of his poems. This W manuscript as it is commonly called, contains poems in both English and Latin in the hand of an unknown amanuensis, and all but six of the English poems appear, often in altered form, in the 1633 edition of The Temple. None of the poems in W mentions Herbert as an Anglican priest, which supports the supposition that it dates from before his ordination in 1630 and represents an earlier stage in his poetic development.

[4]Mary Ellen Rickey, Utmost Art: Complexity in the Verse of George Herbert (Lexington, 1966), p. 131.

[5]Ibid., p. 131.

[6]Patrides, p. 10.

[7]Works, p. 261.

[8]Patrides, pp. 10-11.

[9]See Rosemund Tuve on Herbert's symbolical mode of expression; what she terms his "unselfconscious exhibition of a way of looking at life and at truth which is at the very heart of aesthetic experience: . . . he writes in symbols because he thus sees the world, both outside and inside himself; he sees it as a web of significances, not as a collection of phenomena which we may either endow with significance or leave unendowed" p. 103.

[10]E. M. W. Tillyard, The Elizabethan World Picture (London, 1943), p. 68.

[11]Rickey, p. 92.

[12]See Hutchinson's commentary on this poem. Works, p. 541.

[13]Rickey, p. 99.

[14]Tillyard, p. 108.

[15]Summers, p. 89.

[16]Vendler, p. 25.

[17]Rickey, p. 2.

[18]Ibid., p. 55.

[19]Ibid., p. 19.

[20]C. S. Lewis, The Discarded Image: An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature (Cambridge, 1964), pp. 18-19.

[21]Summers, p. 90.

[22]Tuve, p. 124. See also L. C. Knights' essay "George Herbert" in Explorations: Essays in Criticism Mainly on the Literature of the Seventeenth Century (London, 1958), pp. 112-130. These views run counter to C. A. Patrides' contention that for Herbert "humility was unattainable precisely because he was a great poet,"p. 6. Because Herbert was a devout Christian as well as a great poet he was bound to set "a just price" on his qualities, but it does not follow that "The Temple is the work of a humble man devoid of humility," p. 8, surely, in any case, a contradiction in terms. See also p. 73 (Chapter II, footnote 41).

[23]Works, pp. 283-284.

[24]El-Gabalawy, Saad, "Personification and Fable in George Herbert's Allegories," ESC, V (1979), pp. 28-29. Herbert's tendency "to strip the narrative of the accidentals" succeeds particularly well in this poem "in making evident the identification of different figures with their functions," but the poem is more controlled by the over-riding architectural image than the "personified abstractions engaged in dramatic action" against it.

[25]T. D. Atkinson, A Key to English Architecture (London, 1936), p. 131.

[26]G. Ernest Wright, The Old Testament Against its Environment (London, 1950), p. 45.

[27]Wright, pp. 86-87.

[28]See footnote in Works, p. 84.

[29]See Hutchinson's commentary on "The World," p. 505.

[30]Patricia Dirsztay, Church Furnishings (London, 1978), p. 144.

[31]Works, p. 304.

[32]F. N. Robinson, ed., The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, Mass., 1961), "General Prologue," ll. 527-528.

[33]In the poem, " . . . Anti-Tami-Cami-Categoriam" translated by Mark McCloskey and Paul R. Murphy, The Latin Poetry of George Herbert (Ohio, 1965), pp. 3-16, Herbert is careful to single out ritual as the subject of his disagreement with Andrew Melville,

> Anglo-Scot, I note three parts
> So I may more precisely deal with
> Your Anti Accusations meat:
> One part opposes sacred ritual;
> The second praises sacred authors;
> The third is full of God. About the latter two
> Our minds are in accord: . . . (p.11)

[34]Quoted by Joseph H. Summers, p. 51.

[35]See A Priest to the Temple, Chap. XXIV. in Works, p. 262.

[36]Summers, p. 61.

[37]Tuve, p. 196.

[38]Given in 1 Tim. 1.8, Jam. 4.1 and 1 Pet. 2.11.

[39]See Hutchison's commentary on "Our life is hid," & c. Works p. 505. Herbert was concerned that the country Parson should have "a speciall care" of his Church and that "there be fit, and proper texts of Scripture every where painted." "The Parson's Church" in A Priest to the Temple, Works, p. 246.

[40]See The Church-porch, "Whom when he thinks he hath, the devil hath him" (166), or "We paint the devil foul, . . ."(2) in "Sinne" II. In "Decay" Herbert observes the collusion of Satan and sin. "Where yet both Sinne and Satan, thy old foes" (13), and in The Church Militant, "They are hell's land-marks, Satan's double crest" (219).

[41]Marchette Chute, Two Gentlemen: The Lives of George Herbert and Robert Herrick (New York, 1959), p. 76.

[42]Isaak Walton, "George Herbert" in Lives (rpt. London, 1956), p. 315.

[43]See footnote 10 in Works, p. 378.

[44]J. D. Douglas, The New Bible Dictionary (Grand Rapids, 1962) p. 472.

[45]Rickey, p. 168.

CHAPTER II

MAN

Herbert wrote, in "The Authour's Prayer before Sermon", "Thy hands both made us, and also made us Lords of all thy creatures; giving us one world in our selves, and another to serve us"[1] and "Man" is a meditation which elaborates this thought into a song of praise. Like "The World" it follows a poem expressing deep anguish of soul; the speaker in "Affliction" (IV) is,

> A thing forgot,
> Once a poore creature, now a wonder,
> A wonder tortur'd in the space
> Betwixt this world and that of grace. (3-6)

All his thoughts and bodily parts are in rebellion, but in the final stanza he resolves the chaos in an anticipatory building metaphor;

> Then shall those powers, which work for grief,
> Enter thy pay,
> And day by day
> Labour thy praise, and my relief;
> With care and courage building me,
> Till I reach heav'n, and much more, thee. (25-30)

It seems a natural transition that Herbert should continue to use the metaphor of God as master builder or architect in "Man." For, as Joseph Summers remarks, "One of the most convincing arguments against despair derives from the nature of God as artist."[2] As a seventeenth century poet, Herbert's duty was "to perceive and to communicate God's form,"[3] and as he observes the universe around him he sees that all things are "neat."

The keynote of this poem, then, is order, and the architectural image is used to frame and carry that thought which springs from the the answer to the Psalmist's rhetorical question "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?" (Ps. 8.5). Here Herbert is no longer seeing man merely as the creature who "sold our God, our glorious and gracious God for an apple," but as having been made "a little lower than the angels" and "crowned with glory and honour" (Ps.8.5). It is a healthy corrective to any view of man which depicts him only as a creature with a propensity for sin, and Herbert presents this in seventeenth century commonplaces without in any way departing from Christian orthodoxy.

"Man" is a much longer poem than "The World" and, given an appreciation of the commonplaces, much less subtle. The title is unequivocal and the frank opening line "My God, I heard this day"gives that sense of immediacy and intimacy which the reader of Herbert learns to expect. Herbert achieves this effect with an adroit use of very simple language. The verb "heard" is past tense, but the demonstrative adjective "this" brings the apostrophe right into the present, just as the use of the possessive pronoun "My" gives the sense of a personal involvement with God. The resolution of the previous poem "Affliction" (IV) saw a peaceful settlement between the speaker and his God, and this tranquillity prepares the reader to participate in this reasoned philosophic contemplation of the universe and man's place in it.

The conversational tone of the opening lines, however, does not immediately suggest the universe or God himself as the master

builder. The remark has a proverbial quality which could apply equally to some secular event:

> My God, I heard this day,
> That none doth build a stately habitation,
> But he that means to dwell therein. (1-3)

In the W manuscript Herbert had "no man builds" and later revised it to "none doth build." It is possible that the W version heightens the initial brief suspense since it seems to indicate more clearly that "man" is the builder. The change to "none" preserves a certain amount of ambiguity which is more appropriate when it becomes apparent that the architect-builder is God:

> What house more stately hath there been,
> Or can be, then is Man? to whose creation
> All things are in decay. (4-6)

The fact that the speaker "heard this day" can be seen now not as a conversational gambit, but as something most likely to have been heard in Church.

In the Bible architectural imagery is frequently associated with the millennial hope for permanent peace, prosperity and good government, "For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in possession"(Ps.69.35). This betokens a personal God who is at the same time the creator of the universe. In "Prayer" (II) Herbert celebrates the Creator, "Of what supreme almightie power/Is thy great arm, which spans the east and west,/And tacks the centre to the sphere!" (7-9), who is also the God intimately connected and involved with his creation as the poet says in "Affliction"(IV) "With care and courage building me,/Till I reach heav'n, and much more, thee" (29-30). Herbert's question, "What house more stately hath there been,/Or can be, then

is Man?" is reminiscent of the Psalmist's, "What is man?" and the entire poem amplifies the Psalmist's assertion "Thou madest him to have dominion over the work of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen yea, and the beasts of the field: The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas" (Ps.8.6-8). This tremendous responsibility remains man's prerogative, despite the fact that his fall cursed the rest of creation along with himself, as Herbert reminds the reader, "to whose creation/All things are in decay" (5-6).

But after this salutary reminder Herbert goes on in the next stanza to make the bold claim, "For Man is ev'ry thing,/And more:..." (7-8), Hutchinson points out that while man as microcosm of the universe is a commonplace, the words "And more" echo a sermon of Donne's:

> The properties, the qualities of every Creature, are in Man; the Essence, the Existence of every Creature is for man; so man is every Creature. And therefore the Philosopher draws man into too narrow a table, when he says he is Microcosmos, an Abridgement of the world in little: Nazianzen gives him but his due, when he calls him Mundum Magnum, a world to which all the rest of the world is but subordinate. [4]

The importance of the two words "And more" is seen as Herbert goes on to place man on the Chain of Being above inanimate and animate Nature. Architectural imagery is implicit here as God the Creator of the "stately habitation" stands at its apex as the controlling force:

> For Man is ev'ry thing,
> And more: He is a tree, yet bears more fruit;
> A beast, yet is, or should be more:
> Reason and speech we onely bring.
> Parrats may thank us, if they are not mute,
> They go upon the score. (8-12)

The metaphor of Man as "a stately habitation" is laid aside temporarily in order to look at his status in the universe at large, but the underlying emphasis in God as the divine Architect of an orderly creation strongly sustains the architectural image right through the poem.

Man's place above inanimate nature is indicated by "He is a tree, yet bears more fruit." It is a seeming innocuous comparison which has traditional roots in the Bible. The righteous man is likened to "a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season" (Ps. 1.3). It is an apt metaphor, but as it is used here it is one which has excited a good deal of critical comment. Hutchison says that

> There is no greater textual difficulty in The Temple than this, . . . W, the only surviving MS. which Herbert saw, has "more" (not "mo", as the Nonesuch edition states), which is replaced by "no" in B and all the early printed texts. [5]

The fact that the greatest textual difficulty in The Temple falls within this poem would be sufficient reason for allowing it considerable attention in a close reading, but whether the word in the second line should read "no" or "more" has such a great bearing on the underlying architectural imagery that I propose to look at the arguments for each word in some detail.

I find the argument for "more" convincing because it is sustained by the general sense of the stanza, following the significant observation "For Man is ev'rything,/And More:" Man is "more" than trees, and "should be more" than beasts, because he alone possesses the faculties of reason and speech. If "parrats" appear to use

language, they are indebted to man for training them to do so; "Parrats may thank us, if they are not mute,/ They go upon the score" (11-12). Man's "fruit" here is not the mere abundance of Nature, nor in this case is Herbert talking primarily about "the fruit of the Spirit" (Gal.5.22). The poet points out in "Miserie" that Man's privilege is that he " . . . doth know/the spring whence all things flow" (59-60), and in the later poem "Providence" it is made plain that man exists primarily to glorify God. Since he alone is aware of God's purposes in creation, he alone can bring the praise of the lesser creation to God:

> Of all creatures both in sea and land
> Onely to Man thou hast made known thy wayes,
> And put the penne alone into his hand,
> And made him Secretarie of thy praise.
>
> Beasts fain would sing: birds dittie to their notes;
> Trees would be tuning on their native lute
> To thy renown: but all their hands and throats
> Are brought to Man, while they are lame and mute.
>
> Man is the worlds high Priest: he doth present
> The sacrifice for all; while they below
> Unto the service mutter an assent,
> Such as springs use that fall, and windes that blow. (5-16)

"Providence" is one of Herbert's later poems and has a close affinity to "Man". Both celebrate his high status in creation, where the whole fabric of the divinely ordered universe is claimed to have been made for his benefit. In "Man" the word "more" is therefore appropriate to his high position.

But while I think the argument for the alternative reading "no fruit" is less convincing, it is nevertheless cogent, and rests on the fact that the B manuscript and the first edition -- both more authoritative than W--favour it. It can be supported further by

readings from other poems which use similar wording to express the same idea. Herbert often laments man's failure to produce more of the spiritual fruit enjoined by the apostle Paul, the "...love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control" (Gal. 5:22). In "Affliction"(I) he says,"I reade and sigh, and wish I were a tree;/For sure then I should grow/To fruit or shade" (57-59). In "Employment" (II) he again mourns his lack of fruitfulness:

> Oh that I were an Orenge-tree,
> That busie plant!
> Then should I ever laden be,
> And never want
> Some fruit for him that dressed me. (21-25)

If the reading "no fruit" is accepted, the reservation implied by "A beast, yet is, or should be more:"(9) is intensified. Certainly in other poems Herbert sees man in danger of losing his unique place on the Great Chain of Being if he fails to fulfil his role as "the world's high priest." He expresses this fear in "Miserie":

> Man cannot serve thee; let him go,
> And serve the swine: there, there is his delight:
> He doth not like this vertue, no;
> Give him his dirt to wallow in all night: (43-46)

And in "Employment" (I) he says, "I am no link in thy great chain,/But all my companie is a weed" (21-22). The acceptance of "no fruit" alters the meaning of line 10, "Reason and speech we onely bring" from the sense that man <u>alone</u> brings reason and speech to something amounting to a denigration of these two unique human qualities as the "onely" qualifies "reason" and "speech," rather than "we." But in this reading the distinct feeling that man is not so different from the world around him violates the whole sense of the stanza, and, indeed, the poem, which

is a rejoicing in man's high calling. The image of God as Artificer and sustainer of the Great Chain of Being undergirds the rejoicing in this poem. He is seen as revealing something of his own divine nature in the orderliness of the universe. Arnold Stein comments on "Man":

> The argument of design provides Herbert with a traditional lesson that he can "copy" with evident pleasure. To celebrate the beauty of the natural order is to present formal praise to God, uncomplicated by the tensions and uncertainties of the world of grace.[6]

"More fruit" allows the whole poem to be closely integrated with the dominant architectural imagery of God as the Great Architect and the divinely sanctioned order, but the most up-to-date edition of George Herbert's poems edited by Professor Patrides has "no fruit." Since it might be thought that Patrides has access to fresh bibliographical evidence not available in Canon Hutchinson's earlier edition it is well briefly to review the evidence.

Hutchinson here chooses to follow the W manuscript and rests his case on the argument that "the sense of the whole passage seems to demand "more."[7] Since he very seldom favours W, preferring the B manuscript[8] to the first edition which Patrides looks to as his "primary authority" this is in itself persuasive. Hutchinson accepts Walton's statement that the "little Book" Duncon was given by Herbert as he lay dying was the final version of The Temple.[9] This was presumably copied subsequently at Nicholas Ferrar's establishment at Little Gidding but has not survived. He claims that the copy which is commonly referred to as B "...brings us nearer the author's text than anything else that survives"[10] and that Nicholas Ferrar had it made because the "little Book" was unsuitable as a licensers' and printers'

copy. It is certain that the B manuscript is the licensers' copy because it bears the license for publication by Cambridge University Press and the signatures of five licensers, but it is much less sure that this manuscript was used as the printers' copy.[11]

J. Max Patrick argues very persuasively that there is a good chance that the first edition of The Temple was set up from Herbert's own manuscript which he claims could not have been the "little Book" that Duncon received with the touching message,

> Sir, I pray deliver this little Book to my dear brother Farrer, and tell him, he shall find in it a picture of the many spiritual Conflicts that have past betwixt God and my Soul, before I could subject mine to the will of Jesus my Master: in whose service I have now found perfect freedom; desire him to read it: and then, if he can think it may turn to the advantage of any dejected poor Soul, let it be made publick: if not, let him burn it: for I and it, are less than the least of God's mercies. [12]

It has been pointed out many times that Walton's "Life of Mr. George Herbert" is inaccurate in many particulars, and this is made even clearer in David Novarr's study of Walton as biographer, The Making of Walton's Lives.[13] So Walton's evidence is not fully trustworthy as regards fact. J. Max Patrick questions the story that the "little Book" was the final version of The Temple, claiming that it was probably the manuscript of A Priest to the Temple, and that there is a strong possibility that The Temple

> ...was at least being considered for licensing before his death or may have been being put into type while he was still alive. Whether he actually saw the proofsheets or not, under these circumstances the 1633 editions become the most authoritative source available to us. 14

Amy M. Charles in her recent carefully documented biography, A Life of George Herbert, is frequently critical of Walton's Lives, but she also draws attention to the fact that J. Max Patrick

neglected to consider a valuable piece of evidence in his essay, that is, John Ferrar's eye witness account of how his brother received Herbert's poems just after his death.[15] This bears out Walton's story of Duncon and the "little Book," and although Charles agrees strongly that Walton's Life relies too much on his own hagiographical interpretation and contains many factual errors, in this instance she feels that his version is correct. She says, "I am in entirely in agreement with Canon Hutchinson's opinion that B was the copy sent to the licensers and used by the printers."[16] If Walton's "little Book" was, as seems likely, Herbert's final version of The Temple entrusted to Duncon, the cleanliness of the B. text and the number of differences it contains from the 1633 edition does still suggest the possibility of another and better text for the printers which has been lost. It would be strange if Nicholas Ferrar, who took his dead friend's work very seriously as can be judged from his stand on the offending lines in The Church Militant, would not have carefully corrected the printers' text himself, and there is no evidence of this having been done on the B. text.[17]

So, in this admittedly most difficult textual problem in Herbert, the two best authorities, B and the first edition, agree on "no fruit," and Patrides has elected to keep "no fruit" in his edition because he looks on the 1633 edition as authoritative.[18] The surprising thing, therefore, is Canon Hutchinson's adherence to W which he normally regards as valuable only "to corroborate the readings of B where they differ from 1633, or to support 1633 where it has corrected a slip of B."[19] In general, it would seem that there is an excellent case for regarding the first edition of The Temple as the authoritative text

of Herbert's poems, and this supports Professor Patrides' reading of "no fruit." Yet I cannot help feeling that Canon Hutchinson's reading of "more fruit" accords so much better with the intent of the poem that it is to be preferred to the Patrides election of "no fruit" which clearly violates it. This is strongly supported by the fact that "more fruit" integrates more closely with the dominant architectural imagery, for as Austin Warren has commented, "the marks of God's order are joy, fruit and peace."[20] To say that man bore "no fruit" would be to contradict the poet's vision of God the Architect's ordered universe.

The form of this poem too, would support "more fruit" for it is itself a hieroglyph of order, without trace of the artistically conceived visual disorder that Herbert created in poems like "The Collar." In each stanza Man's "symmetrie" and "proportions" are reflected in the balance of the two lines of iambic pentameter, while the two trimetric lines frame the stanza and sometimes connect by rhyme with the two tetrametric lines. Herbert varies his rhyme--eight rhyme schemes in nine stanzas -- and sentence structure with great skill while keeping the line lengths constant 354453.[21] The poem is a visible reflection of diversity in unity depicting the infinite variableness of mankind within his ordered frame, and the infinite variety of Nature within the larger frame of the universe. This sense of order is reinforced in the third stanza where Herbert returns to a frank architectural image:

> Man is all symmetrie,
> Full of proportions, one limbe to another,
> And all to all the world besides:
> Each part may call the furthest, brother:
> For head with foot hath private amitie,
> And both with moons and tides. (13-18)

The underlying mediaeval world view is present in this stanza, as it is throughout the poem, but Renaissance thinking is just as evident in the architectural terms. Herbert's access to the common store of mediaeval and Biblical images is often commented on, but his methods of rejuvenating these stock images receive somewhat less attention. In this instance what might be a jaded architectural image is revivified by its emphasis on "symmetrie" and "proportion," and both ideas are carried into the visual presentation of the poem. They express the architectural ideals of the Renaissance, ideals in which the poet was vitally interested. The church at Leighton Bromswold in Huntingdonshire was "re-edified and refurnished" under Herbert's direction from 1627 onwards.[22] By his express wish the reading pew and pulpit balance each other on the corners of the transcept crossing, facing the congregation, which prompted Walton's comment that

> . . . they should neither have a precedency or priority of the other; but that prayer and preaching being equally useful, might agree like brethren, and have equal honour and estimation. 23

Assymmetry was not a problem for the Middle Ages as critics of Gothic buildings often point out, and the Renaissance urge towards balance and proportion was seen in England during Elizabeth's reign as English domestic architecture came into its own.[24] Herbert's "stately house," "braver Palace," or "stately habitation" had its actual prototype in Inigo Jones' classically styled designs for the aristocracy. A well-educated Renaissance man like Thomas Neville, Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, where Herbert spent fourteen years, designed and supervised the building of his

beautifully proportioned court, even moving the clock tower, stone by stone, to bring it into line with his ambitious plan.[25] Herbert's distant cousin, Henry, who succeeded to the title Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery in 1633, was an architect of some distinction, so on all sides Herbert was directly influenced by the societal urge towards simplicity, symmetry and proportion in architectural design. This obviously influenced his poetry, and particularly this poem, enabling him to visualise man as a perfectly proportioned building. It is, of course, an ancient device to liken man to a building as the writer of Ecclesiastes does in describing the body's reaction to the approach of death, "In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble" (Eccles.12.3), but Herbert's insistence on proportion and symmetry is not found there. However, like the Preacher, he has augmented his architectural metaphor with the even more common one of the human body as a commonwealth of parts, "Each part may call the furthest brother"(16). It was a popular figure in the seventeenth century, a standby for sermons and used by Shakespeare in Coriolanus and Milton in Of Reformation.[26]

The apostle Paul had often used the same two metaphors to describe the corporate nature of the Christian Church with the hope that individual Christians

> ...grow up into him in all things, who is the head, even Christ; From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. (Eph. 4.15-16)

Stephen J. Brown remarks on the interpenetration of these two metaphors,

"few blend metaphors as does St. Paul: few as he allow a metaphor to drift on and tide over the barrier that separates one thought from another."[27] George Herbert is one of the few and this harmonious arrangement of the human body where "...head to foot hath private amitie," (17) is in marked contrast to the previous poem where he says:

> All my attendants are at strife,
> Quitting their place
> Unto my face:
> Nothing performs the task of life:
> The elements are let loose to fight,
> And while I live, trie out their right. (13-18)

In the last line of the third stanza Herbert draws on the mediaeval idea that different parts of the body are governed by different constellations and that the harmony of the human body is in harmony with the overall design of the universe. He goes on to work out this notion in the five following stanzas as he portrays the Ptolomaic universe which was still part of early seventeenth century thinking; "The earth doth rest, heavn'n move,..." (16) while man "... is in little all the sphere" (22). In "Man's medley" Herbert makes it even clearer that man occupies the middle place in the great chain of being, between the world of sense and the realm of the spirit, "Man ties them both alone,/And makes them one./With one hand touching heav'n, with th' other earth" (10-12), and Platonic thought here accords with the Christian view that man is both body and soul.

In view of these ideas so prevalent throughout The Temple it is reasonable to ask if Herbert the Christian poet was a hopeless

obscurantist, hiding his head in the sand, ignoring the stirring discoveries of his day. It can be said, however, that although he often chose to use the common idiom of his day, it does not follow that he found its intellectual ferment anything less than exhilarating and challenging. His interest in new architectural trends has been touched on, and it is apparent from his Latin poetry that he thoroughly approved Bacon's new scientific methods. Some allowance has to be made for the conventional extravagant nature of seventeenth century rhetoric in Herbert's poem congratulating Bacon on the publication of Novum Organum, the second part of Instauratio Magna, in 1620. As newly appointed Orator of Cambridge University he undertakes to laud and honour the University's most distinguished graduate on behalf of the University, in language appropriate to the occasion:

> The instigator of research, archpriest
> Of truth, lord of the inductive method
> .....
> ...Nature's cosmographer,
> Philosophy's store, trustee
> Of speculation and experiment,
> Color-bearer of impartiality, savior
> Of science, long an orphan now; (4-13)

The fact that Bacon and Herbert remained on very cordial terms after Bacon's disgrace and dismissal from office in 1621 suggests the real warmth and sincerity in what otherwise might have been excessive adulation. That Bacon valued the friendship can be deduced from the dedication of his translation of some of the Psalms to "his very good friend Mr. George Herbert."[28]

Herbert's Latin poetry reveals him as being in tune with his age and conversant with what was happening around him as does his

architectural imagery. There are references in his English poems to overseas discoveries. In "Providence," he says "The India nut alone/Is clothing, meat and trencher, drink and corn,/Boat, cable, sail and needle, all in one" (124-126). Other poems have scientific, astronomical, navigational, and business metaphors which indicate his wide ranging interests and knowledge. "Man" has an indirect reference to "the optick glass" in "His eyes dismount the highest starre" (21), and this comment is part of the poet's serious appraisal of man's ability, and even right, to reach into the unknown:

> Nothing hath got so farre,
> But Man hath caught and kept it, as his prey.
> His eyes dismount the highest starre:
> He is in little all the sphere,
> Herbs gladly cure our flesh, because that they
> Finde their acquaintance there. (19-24)

Out of context this poem could almost serve as a manifesto for the militant humanism of a Pico della Mirandola. Within The Church it balances the more usual portrayal of man caught between the desires of the flesh and the spirit. But the underlying image of God as the Great Architect acts to preserve the sense of man's dependence upon his Creator. For in the last analysis man is merely a " stately habitation," specially designed it is true, but an artifact dependent on the good grace of the Artificer.

It is part of the overall design of the universe that Man, in Genesis, be given "dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air"(Gen.1.26) and told to "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it"(Gen.1.27). Jew and Christian alike have regarded this as the charter for all true scientific and material progress. The word "subdue" implies the acquisition of knowledge

in order to manipulate the material environment for the good of the human race, together with the rest of creation. The frequent references in the Bible to the natural and animal world indicate that while "Nothing hath got so farre,/But Man hath caught and kept it, as his prey" (19-20), he has, nevertheless, a responsibility not to despoil his environment or take a foolish pride in his own acquisition of knowledge, a subject Herbert explores in some depth in "Vanitie" (I). There, the poet invites the reader to share his censure of "The fleet astronomer" who surveys the heavens as if he had designed them; the too-venturesome pearl diver and the woman, "Who with excessive pride/Her own destruction and his danger wears" (13-14); and "The subtil Chymick" whose cunning "... can devest/And strip the creature naked, till he finde/The callow principles within their nest" (15-17). Humility and moral accountability are necessary corollaries to the divine sanction allowed by a God who cares about his creation even to "each sparrow that falls to the ground" (Matt.10.29-30). Dominant creature though he is, Man is to emulate his Maker by exercising the same care for the lesser creation, "thou shalt not muzzle the ox when treading out the corn" (Deut.25.4). Under these strictures he is free to reach after knowledge, "His eyes dismount the highest starre" (21), because in doing so, he will be finding out about himself, "He is in little all the sphere" (22).

In this commonplace Herbert's first image of man as "a stately habitation" has expanded. To see himself as the creation in microcosm would be vainglorious were it not for the implied recognition that the Architect chooses to fashion his creation to his own design. It is a closely integrated design, each part working to augment the

others; "Herbs gladly cure our flesh: because that they/Finde their acquaintance there" (23-24). Herbert displays something of his own interest in medicine here, quoting the commonly held notion that the cure for every disease may be found in Nature. He refers again to the same subject in the seventh stanza,"...in ev'ry path/He treads down that which doth befriend him/When sicknesse makes him pale and wan" (44-46). Father Lawrence in Romeo and Juliet expressed the same idea as he soliloquised over his "baleful weeds and precious juiced flowers"

> O mickle is the powerful grace that lies,
> In herbs, plants, stones, and their true qualities:
> For nought so vile that on earth doth live,
> But to the earth some special good doth give. 29

In his letters Herbert sometimes refers to his own poor state of health, and Walton says he suffered from a "Quotidian Ague" about 1626, and he "became his own Physitian, and cur'd himself of his Ague, by forbearing Drink, and not eating any Meat, no not Mutton, nor a Hen or Pigeon, unless they were salted; and by such a constant Dyet he removed his Ague."[30] Amy M. Charles surmises that Herbert spent some of this time translating Cornaro's A Treatise of Temperance and Sobrietie, and may have put some of the old Italian's recipes for good health and longevity into practice.[31] Herbert's preoccupation with the subject is apparent in the later, much longer poem, "Providence," "Who hath the vertue to expresse the rare/And curious vertues both of herbs and stones?" and "...if an herb hath power, what have the starres?/A rose, beside his beautie, is a cure" (73-78). Nothing lies outside the divine pattern. Each part of the overall design has its own special function, and Man's high privilege

is to discern the design, and praise the Designer:

> Ev'n poysons praise thee. Should a thing be lost?
> Should creatures want for want of heed their due?
> Since where are poysons, antidotes are most:
> The help stands close, and keeps the fear in view. (85-88)

We in the twentieth century recognise that there is a great deal of truth, perhaps much of it symbolic, in the Elizabethan commonplace, but conditioned by Darwinism still find something arrogant in Herbert's confident assertion:

> For us the windes do blow,
> The earth doth rest, heav'n move and fountains flow.
> Nothing we see, but means our good,
> As our delight or as our treasure:
> The whole is, either our cupboard of food,
> Or cabinet of pleasure. (25-30)

As has been shown, Herbert's Ptolemaic conception of the universe in this poem does not mean that he himself rejected Copernican theory, but as E.M.W. Tillyard says:

> They did not doubt that the world and its contents had been made for man, and they were not troubled with any qualms about divine justice if that the world was made to suffer through his own fall from grace. Man himself had incurred such vengeance, while the world existed so undoubtedly for his benefit, that the sufferings of nature were both dwarfed by comparison with his own and in themselves were of no consequence. From this it follows that the Elizabethans looked on the lower end of the chain of being mainly in the light of themselves. Its great variety and ingenuity were indeed testimonies of the creator's wonderful power, but its main function was to provide symbols or to point to morals for the benefit of man. 32

But in "Man" Herbert draws no direct parallel between what he sees in individual aspects of Nature and what it teaches man, as he does in "Providence": "Bees work for man; and yet they never bruise/Their masters flower, but leave it, having done,/As fair as ever, and as fit to use"... (65-67). Nor does he enlarge on what we might expect to

find in "our cupboard of food" (29) as he does there:

> Thy cupboard serves the world: the meat is set,
> Where all may reach: no beast but knows his feed.
> Birds teach us hawking; fishes have their net:
> The great prey on the lesse, they on some weed. (49-52)

In "Man" he choses to subdue the specific for a more general meditation on the works of Providence. He sees all the works of Nature as having been designed with man's "good," "delight" and "treasure" in the mind of God.

Herbert finds the orderliness of the universe very beautiful, and the key to deciphering its mystery is in perceiving behind it the Architect who planned it all. His childlike delight in natural loveliness is apparent as he personifies "starres," "night," "Musick" and "light":

> The starres have us to bed;
> Night draws the curtain, which the sunne withdraws;
> Musick and light attend our head.
> All things unto our flesh are kinde
> In their descent and being; to our minde
> In their ascent and cause. (31-36)

Yet here he is not primarily concerned with the effects of Nature's loveliness on himself. Like the Hebrew poets his intention is to see the God of Nature as he reveals himself in his creation and he makes this even clearer in a poem like "The Pulley." God withholds the final blessing, Rest, from Mankind because, "He would adore my gifts instead of me,/And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature" (14-15). In the sixth stanza of "Man" the pun on "sunne" lifts the thought beyond the realm of day and night to thoughts of death and resurrection. The poet uses the same metaphor in "Affliction" (IV), but to emphasise Christ's salvation, "As the sunne scatters by his light/All the

rebellions of the night" (23-24). The distinctively Christian view of death as sleep is often remarked on by visitors to the catacombs in Rome, where the Christian hope of resurrection contrasts with the pagan sense of hopelessness and loss in the face of death. The apostle Paul wrote to the Thessalonians so that they should not be ignorant of these matters:

> ...concerning them who are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.
> .....
> For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God;... (1 Thess. 4.13-16)

Herbert's attitude in "Death" is sanguine, if not positively cheerful, "Therefore we can go die as sleep, and trust/Half that we have/Unto an honest faithfull grave"(21-23), and he follows through that thought in "Dooms-day," perhaps his most light-hearted poem:

> Come away
> Make no delay.
> Summon all the dust to rise,
> Till it stirre, and rubbe the eyes;
> While this member jogs the other,
> Each one whispering, Live you brother?
>
> Come away,
> Make this the day.
> Dust, alas, no musick feels,
> But thy trumpet: then it kneels,
> As peculiar notes and strains
> Cure Tarantulas raging pains. (1-12)

In "Man" the thought of resurrection in "Musick and Light attend our head" (33) is combined with the notion of celestial harmony in accord with Nature. The idea is an old one -- Chaucer used it to describe the beauty of the garden in <u>The Parliament of Foules:</u>

Of instruments of strenges in accord
Herde I so pleye a ravyshying swetnesse
That God, that makere is of al and lord,
Ne herde beter, as I gesse,
Therwith a wynd, unnethe it myghte be lesse,
Made in the leves grene a noyse softe
Accordaunt to the foules song aloft.[33]

The next half of this sixth stanza is even more clearly Platonic, "All things unto our flesh are kinde/In their descent and being; to our minde/In their ascent and cause" (34-36). The first part appears to describe the soul's descent through the spheres as it acquires characteristics from each,[34] and the second suggests that Herbert accepts the Renaissance version of the Platonic idea that the mind may ascend to God through a series of upward steps by the contemplation of created things. The poet's letters show him "clamourous and greedy" for books; anxious to obtain those "which were not to be got in England."[35] It is reasonable to suppose that he was acquainted with a popular work like the opusculum of Sir Robert Bellarmine, published in 1615, De Ascensione Mentis in Deum. The author postulates a fifteen step contemplative ladder, man, the universe at large, the world, waters, fire, the heavenly bodies and so on, by which men may reach up to God,[36] and Herbert's following stanza is a brief meditation on one element, water. He brings the underlying architectural imagery to the surface as a means of focussing direct attention on the wonder of a God who has created and sustains "all things neat":

Each thing is full of dutie:
Waters united are our navigation;
Distinguished, our habitation;
Below our drink; above our meat;
Both are our cleanliness. Hath one such beautie?
Then how are all things neat? (37-42)

Here the poet's almost uncanny ability to achieve the maximum effect with the minimum of words is apparent. The word "united" combined with "Waters" and linked to "Navigation" includes oceans, lakes, rivers, even canals, since they are navigable, and his choice projects the seventeenth century's lively interest in new trade routes, colonies and overseas discoveries. The Christian poet was no recluse; Herbert had first-hand knowledge of his stepfather's involvement with the Virginia Company during his term in Parliament in 1624,[37] and said later in A Priest to the Temple that there was "no School to a Parliament."[38]

Even as a country parson Herbert retained a lively interest in secular affairs and education. This is typical of neo-Platonic humanism but in his case humanistic ideas have to be correlated with, and subservient to, Protestant Christianity. Unlike the neo-Platonists he thought of the body as having a permanent importance, a point that is clearly made in this poem and "Providence." Although the Christian's aim to subdue the flesh has an apparent counterpart in the Platonic idea that the body is on a lower plane than the soul and as such its physical requirements are to be resisted, the resemblance is more apparent than real. Christianity teaches the resurrection of both body and soul. The Platonist avers that only the soul is eternal. And like Martin Luther Herbert believes that all men's activities, no matter how mundane, can be dedicated to God's glory. So the physical requirements of the body have their proper place within the Providential economy.

But there is another, more spiritual, dimension to "Waters united

are our navigation; Distinguished, our habitation" for the words recall the great creative act, "Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together in one place, and let the dry land appear" (Gen.1.9). Herbert's use of ellipsis continues in the next line, "Below, our drink; above, our meat" (40). His predilection for this style goes back to his early skill in Latin composition. In 1620 he describes Bacon as, "Minister of light, bedevilment of idols/And clouds, colleague of the Sun, truth's/Measurer, sophistry's whip ..."[39] and he later uses the same technique in "Prayer" (I):

> Prayer the Churches banquet, Angels age,
> Gods breath in man returning to his birth,
> The soul in paraphrase, heart in-pilgrimage,
> The Christian plummet sounding heav'n and earth; (1-4)

The technique in "Man" is markedly successful in compressing a wide range of meaning into the fewest possible words, and the starkness works with the underlying architectural imagery and hieroglyphic lines to stress the stability, the order, and the overall design of the universe.

Herbert sees water first as meeting the wider needs of mankind in the interchange of trade, ideas, and the opportunity to spread the gospel. Now he turns to the everyday need of the body for drink, and the rain to produce "meat," "Below our drink, above our meat; Both are our cleanliness." But there is a spiritual aspect present in the choice of water as the element on which to base his brief meditation. Christ is the "living water" promised to the Christian on earth, "the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John4.10-14) as he is, too, the "bread which came down from heaven" (John 6.5). The word

"Both" suggests Christ as being the "meat" and "drink" which the believer partakes of in the Eucharist; just as "cleanlinesse" indicates freedom from sin by repentance, confession, and absolution before communion. It also implies baptism, "Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death, that as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6.4). The question "Hath one such beautie?" again, first, refers to all the beneficent qualities of one of the elements, but also points to Christ. The thought is amplified in the last line--if one element is so beautiful and so necessary to man--"Then how are all things neat?" This rhetorical question celebrates the fact that all of creation is wonderfully fashioned and ordered to serve man, but on the spiritual level the rejoicing is in the Artificer, rather than the artifacts.

As Herbert returns to this open reference to God as the Great Architect of the universe, it becomes apparent that the metaphor has been expanding in a subtle way. Man himself is the initial artifact - "a stately habitation," but the wonders of the whole creation have been touched on, as they relate to man. The natural creation is a marvellous work of art but it is temporal, "All things are in decay." Yet there is hope for regeneration simply because the divine Architect has a wider plan. The universe and man are destined for redemption and man himself can be built up in the faith in this life. He can also take a hand in his own "edification" in the acquisition of useful knowledge and its application to the general good. As he ponders the magnificence and order of

creation man is "edifying" himself to an even greater extent, since it elevates his mind to perceive the Creator in the creation; as Herbert put it in "The Temper," "The grosser world stands to thy word and art;/But thy diviner world of grace/Thou suddenly dost raise and race;/And ev'ry day a new Creatour art" (5-8). And in his art and artifacts man comes close to emulating the divine Architect.

Herbert was conscious from an early age that he had a talent for writing poetry. His decision to dedicate it to God's service is in a letter written to his Mother on New Year's Day,1609/10, accompanied by two sonnets; "For my own part my meaning (dear Mother) is in these Sonnets, to declare my resolution to be, that my poor Abilities in Poetry, shall be all, and ever consecrated to Gods glory."[40] If the resolution sounds slightly pretentious to modern ears it is well to recollect that as far as we know it was a resolution that Herbert kept. The overwhelming realisation that his "poor abilities" --and in his years at Cambridge he was too good a poet not to have been aware of how much these "abilities" increased-- were, indeed, "poor" compared with the riches and glory of God, kept him humble in the best sense of the word. His predicament in "Jordan" (II) is finally resolved by the knowledge "There is in love a sweetnesse readie penn'd: Copie onely that and save expense" (17-18). His later fears of losing his poetic powers, which he is far from under-rating,were calmed by, "Thou art still my God, be out of fear./He will be pleased with that dittie,/And if I please him, I write fine and wittie" ("the Forerunners," 10-12). It is impossible to agree with C. A. Patrides' statement as he compares Herbert with Donne:

> ...Herbert in electing a plainer diction, simpler phrasing, and far more subdued tone, displays not humility, but pride still. The Temple is the work of a humble man devoid of humility only because a great poet must set a 'just price' on his qualities. 41

That Herbert as a "great poet"must set a "just price" on his qualities is in complete accordance with the Biblical injunction that every man "... should not think more highly than he ought to think; but[to]think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Rom.12.3). It is a far more insidious form of pride to depreciate the gifts God has given to be used to his glory, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pet. 4.10).

The varied gifts men possess are part of the vastness of God's love towards Man, a love beyond human comprehension, but which can be partly experienced if Man takes time to contemplate the work of God's hands. And the poet turns again to a consideration of man's privileged place on the planet:

> More servants wait on Man,
> Then he'l take notice of: in ev'ry path
> He treads down that which doth befriend him,
> When sicknesse makes him pale and wan.
> Oh mightie love! Man is one world, and hath
> Another to attend him.
> (43-48)

The state of medicine in the seventeenth century was such that Herbert could say in A Priest to the Temple that the Parson should be a doctor as well as lawyer to his parishioners, "...if there be any of his flock sick, hee is their Physician, or at least his Wife..." He recommends the Parson possess a book on Anatomy, one in "Phisick" and a "Herball He goes into considerable detail on the subject of herbs:

> In the knowledge of simples, wherein the manifolde wisdome of God is wonderfully to be seen, one thing would be carefully observed; which is, to know what herbs may be used in stead of drugs of the same nature, and to make the garden the shop: For home-bred medicines are both more easie for the Parsons purse, and more familiar for all mens bodyes. So, where the Apothecary useth either for loosing, Rubarb or for binding, Bolearmena, the Parson useth damask or white Roses for the one, and plantaine, shepherds purse, knot-grasse for the other, and that with better success. [42]

With these homely remedies it is easy to see that man literally "treads down that which doth befriend him" (45). But Man's status is "a little lower than the angels" so the "sicknesse that makes him pale and wan" is not so much a physical as a spiritual malaise. The love of God "which doth befriend him" in Christ is too often ignored. And the thought of grace leads the poet to a spontaneous ejaculation of praise. "Oh mightie love!" and this overflows into the song of praise which follows, "Antiphon" (II):

> Chor. Praised be the God of Love,
> Men. Here below,
> Angels. And here above:
> Chor. Who hath dealt his mercies so,
> Ang. To his friend,
> Men. And to his foe; (1-6)

The reiteration of the thought in "Man" is seen in "Who hath dealt his mercies so, To his friend, And to his foe" (4-6). The God of Love provides sustenance for all men, he "sendeth rain on the just and the unjust" (Matt.5.45). In the same way he offers salvation to all men in Christ. The antiphon also stresses that "...Man is one world, and hath/Another to attend him" (47-48), and goes beyond it in suggesting that Man is also attended by the spiritual world. His praise mingles with "Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven" [44] which is the theme of "Antiphon" (II).

The final stanza returns to the framing architectural metaphor; and Man "a stately habitation" has become "so brave a Palace":

> Since then, my God, thou hast,
> So brave a Palace built; O dwell in it,
> That it may dwell with thee at last!
> Till then, afford us so much wit;
> That, as the world serves us, we may serve thee,
> And both thy servants be. (49-54)

The thought of the first stanza is rounded out, "... none doth build a stately habitation,/But he that means to dwell therein," with the prayer that God should "dwell in it,/That it may dwell with thee at last." The metaphor of God as the Great Architect which has been inherent in the meditation on the wonders of the created world is merged with the image of man as the temple of the indwelling Holy Spirit. This is the major theme of The Temple and all Herbert's poetic powers are concentrated on urging that necessity upon the reader. The architectural image has successfully conveyed something of God's power as divine architect and indicated the ordered hierarchy of the universe, giving Man his place as "the crown of creation" destined eventually for fellowship with God. The meditation on that thought engenders not only a proper sense of gratitude, but a strong desire to be at one with the Creator. And finally there is a brief recapitulation of man's unique capacity for reasoning, "afford us so much wit"-- this being the means by which man perceives the order in the universe and deduces the presence of a living God who has made every provision for Man's bodily and spiritual sustenance.

In "Man" Herbert started with virtually the same architectural image as in "The World," but has accomplished something very different. The emphasis in "The World" was a wide-ranging exploration of sacred

and secular history centering on God's plan of redemption in Christ. Here the image has been deployed to sustain a philosophic meditation on the orderliness of creation and man's unique place in it. The poem is characterised by a decorous retraint, displaying no unseemly exultation in man's high destiny; and this is due, at least in part, to the controlled handling of the architectural image. Herbert has chosen not to elaborate it more than is absolutely necessary, although the reader is reminded of it from time to time, especially in the third stanza, and more subtly in the symmetrical form of the verse. The imagery here, perhaps, owes as much to mediaeval iconography as the Bible, but in the next poem, "Sion" it will be seen to stem directly from Pauline metaphor, interpreted by Protestant theology, and the relationship to The Temple thus more clearly distinguished.

Footnotes

[1]Works, p. 288

[2]Summers, p. 89.

[3]Ibid., p. 93.

[4]Quoted by Hutchinson in his extensive commentary on "Man," Works, p. 508.

[5]Ibid., p. 508.

[6]Arnold Stein, George Herbert's Lyrics (Baltimore, 1968), p. 102.

[7]Works, p. 508.

[8]See Works, lxxi-ii. "More" is one of the three words Hutchinson has adopted from W.

[9]Works, p. xxxix. See below for Walton's full statement on the Duncon episode.

[10]Works, p. lxxi.

[11]See the interesting argument J. Max Patrick puts forward in "The Editor as Critic and the Critic as Editor." Papers read at a Clark Library Seminar, November 13, 1971 (Los Angeles, 1973), p. 5.

[12]Walton, p. 314.

[13]David Novarr, The Making of Walton's Lives (Ithaca, 1958), p. 313. Novarr claims that Walton's prime motive in his portrayal of "holy Mr. Herbert" was to counter the commonly held idea that service in the lower echelons of the Church was unsuitable for "the dignity of men of talent and education and family." Walton himself considered the priesthood to be the highest possible vocation, and "regardless of his birth and ability, he saw in Herbert's ultimate choice a translation from sin to blessedness." His biography does tend to dwell on those aspects of the poet's career which emphasize the renunciation of worldly advancement for the calling of a humble country parson, and The Temple has often been read as depicting that conflict of choice.

[14]J. Max Patrick, p. 5.

[15]Amy M. Charles in A Life of George Herbert (Ithaca, 1977), pp. 181-186, gives a succinct account of the probable course followed in the publishing of The Temple after Herbert's death in 1633. John Ferrar's firsthand observation of his brother's reaction to "the little book" is quoted in a lengthy footnote.

[16]Charles, p. 182.

[17]J. Max Patrick comments " . . . the Bodleian manuscript is a clean one and bears no signs of having been handled by the typesetters" p. 6. Further, it is unlikely that Nicholas Ferrar "having gone to all the trouble of checking Herbert's final version and having a fair copy made of it, failed to correct the errors in that copy before he sent it to the printer" p. 7.

[18]Patrides, p. 1.

[19]Works, pp. lxxi-ii.

[20]Austin Warren, "George Herbert" Rage for Order: Essays in Criticism (Chicago, 1948), p. 30.

[21]Rickey, p. 143.

[22]G. W. O. Addleshaw and Frederick Etchells, The Architectural Setting of Anglican Worship (London, 1948), p. 79.

[23]Walton, p. 278.

[24]Atkinson, p. 131.

[25]See G. M. Trevelyan, Trinity College: An Historical Sketch (Cambridge, 1972), p. 23 for a detailed account of Neville's activities. It was to Neville that Magdalen Herbert confided her son on his entrance to Cambridge in 1609, and the master of Trinity, according to Walton, took him "into his particular care" Lives, p. 263.

[26]See Patrides' footnotes, 17-18, p.107.

[27]Stephen J. Brown, Image and Truth: Studies in the Imagery of the Bible (Rome, 1955), p. 111.

[28]Bottrall, p. 18.

[29]Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, II, ii, 16-19.

[30]Walton, p. 30.

[31]Amy M. Charles draws attention to the affinity between "the lively old Italian" and the disciplined Englishman; "Cornaro emerges as an affable, devout and still rather voluble advocate of discipline and order in life, qualities for which Herbert always showed considerable respect." Herbert, however, did not share the volubility and shortened Cornaro's treatise as he translated it, pp. 130-131.

[32]Tillyard, p. 80.

[33]Robinson, ed., Chaucer's The Parliament of Fowls, ll 197-203.

[34]Somnium Scipionis, I, xii, 13-14, quoted in P.M. Kean, The Art of Narrative: Chaucer and the Making of English Poetry, Vol. II (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), p. 31.

[35] Works, p. 367.

[36] Brown, p. 130.

[37] Charles, p. 107.

[38] Works, p. 277.

[39] The Latin Poetry of George Herbert, pp. 14-16.

[40] Works, p. 363.

[41] Patrides, p. 8.

[42] Works, p. 261

[43] Book of Common Prayer, The Order of Holy Communion.

CHAPTER THREE

SION.

"Sion," the third poem to be considered here, is not found in W and is, therefore, assumed to be late. It exhibits Herbert's mature poetic technique that effortlessly carries all the nuances of meaning he took such delight in presenting. As with the previous poems its placing is significant, coming as it does after "Conscience" and before "Home." The carping accusations of the "pratler" who can only see "a fair look" to call it "foul" are silenced by the "physick" of "My Saviours bloud: when ever at his board/I do but taste it, straight it cleanseth me,/And leaves thee not a word" (14-16). The connection with "Sion" is through Christ's sacrifice; a connection which will become more apparent as the poem is explicated. In "The Sacrifice" Christ says:

> Thenwith a scarlet robe they me aray;
> Which shews my bloud to be the onely way
> And cordiall left to repair mans decay:
> Was ever grief like mine?
>
> Thenon my head a crown of thorns I wear;
> For these are all the grapes Sion doth bear,
> Though I my vine planted and watred there:
> Was ever grief like mine? (157-164)

The poet's plea in "Home" is the refrain, "O show thyself to me,/Or take me up to thee!" (5-6); it shows a heartfelt longing for Sion, the new Jerusalem, the eternal dwelling of the saints. "Sion" itself is a contemplation of both the Old and New Dispensations, the Chosen

People of the Old Testament, and the Ecclesia of the New.

The architectural imagery in "Sion" differs from that of the previous two poems. It does not stem from the traditional figure of God as the divine architect, but relies more directly on Pauline metaphors -- the Church or Christian soul as the temple of God, with Christ as the foundation stone. God is, of course, ultimately the master builder, but initially it is man, not God, who is seen as the architect of an actual historic building. The fact that Solomon's temple is alluded to in the opening lines is typical of Herbert's use of architectural features as concrete starting points as in "The Churche floore," "Mark you the floore? that square and speckled stone" (1), or "Love-joy" "As on a window late I cast mine eye" (1). In "Sion," the imagery is sustained, enlarged, and deepened throughout the poem as Herbert works through a mingling of his greater and lesser architectural images with those of music and warfare to produce a poem of extraordinary richness and density.

The title itself conjures up a wealth of images and associations that stir the imagination, for the most naïve reader readily associates Jerusalem with Sion, and Israel with Jerusalem. Solomon's temple quickly became synonomous with its location, and inherited all the Biblical tradition already adhering to it. Sion originally was the stronghold of the Jebusites that King David conquered and made his capital, so that it became known as "the city of David". (II.Sam.V.7). Scholars disagree as to whether "Sion" referred to the actual site of the Jebusite city or was the word for a fortress[1], but in the Old Testament Sion is both a stronghold and the dwelling place of Israel's king, whether temporal or spiritual, "... the Lord shall reign over

them in Mount Zion from henceforth, even forever. And thou, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem" (Mic.4.7-8).

The city of Zion inherited the sacred associations with the mysterious Melchizedek, king of Salem, who as "the priest of the most high God" blessed Abraham and gave him bread and wine (Gen.14.18-20). The writer to the Hebrews linked Christ with Melchizedek (Heb.5.10). The connection with Abraham was further strengthened by the Holy of Holies in Solomon's temple being erected on the summit of Mount Moriah, the traditional site of his offer to sacrifice Isaac. The ancient Biblical Zion is under the present Mosque of Omar in the Old City of Jerusalem, and is not to be confused with Mount Zion in the south-west section of modern Jerusalem, hence present day Israel's strong interest in retaining the Old City. So history and tradition associated with the sacred temple site and the city of Jerusalem itself up to the present combine to give the word a range and depth of meaning found in no other place name for both Jew and Christian. Not surprisingly the early Christian Church, which was largely Jewish, saw the earthly city of Jerusalem as a type of the heavenly city which God himself would build. John the Divine saw "the bride, the Lamb's wife" as "...that great city, the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God ..." (Rev.21.10-11). The Protestant poet to whom the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are infallible is consciously evoking a vast array of images and emotions in his choice of "Sion" as a title.

Rosemund Tuve comments,"'Sion' is a poem ostensibly about

Solomon's Temple, really about Zion the faithful people or Church of God",[2] and her observation goes straight to the heart of the poem:

> Lord, with what glorie wast thou serv'd of old,
> When Solomons temple stood and flourished!
> Where most things were of purest gold;
> The wood was all embellished
> With flowers and carvings, mysticall and rare:
> All show'd the builders, crav'd the seeers care. 1-6

Herbert's apostrophe is directed to the magnificence of Solomon's temple, "Lord, with what glorie wast thou serv'd of old,/When Solomon's temple stood and flourished"(1-2). In size or grandeur it did not compare with Herod's temple in the time of Christ, but the Bible goes into enough detail to convey something of its splendour. Solomon was the builder, but the temple was built to conform to God's command,[3] and Israel's wisest monarch recognised that "... the house which I build is great, for great is our God above all gods. But who is able to build him a house seeing the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain him"(II Chron.6-7).

Herbert does not linger on the outer appearance or dimensions of the temple. He focuses instead, as he often does, on the lesser architectural features, "Where most things were of purest gold;/The wood was all embellished/With flowers and carvings mysticall and rare" (3-5). In these three brief lines the poet accurately condenses the Biblical record, "He [Solomon] overlaid also the house, the beams, the posts, and its walls, and its doors with gold; and carved cherubim on the walls"(2 Chron. 3.7). The Bible relates how Solomon searched far and wide for materials and workmen to erect a Temple worthy of Israel's God, and the finished building, as Herbert succinctly puts it "...show'd the builders, crav'd the seeers care" (6). In this

line Hutchinson chooses to follow the B text which has an extra /e/ in "seeers" and justifies it, "I retain the spelling of B, "seeers," because it both helps the scansion and avoids a misunderstanding."[4] Patrides, who follows the 1633 edition consistently, reads "seers."[5] It is most likely that the poet intended both meanings, for, as Mary Ellen Rickey says, "one of the poet's most important instruments of language [is] the serious pun."[6] She goes on to explain:

> he uses [it] in such a distinctive way it accounts for an appreciable part of his poetic effect.....
> .....
> Much of Herbert's poetry, however, is genuinely multi-levelled; and his feat of managing language so that several metaphorical statements are offered at one time, and offered without the fanfare of conspicuous ambiguity, makes his verse very different from that of the other so-called metaphysical poets, whose practice it was to use different images successively, not attendantly. 7

The ambiguity of "seeers" carries at least three ideas, all of which have connections with "Sion." Hutchinson's spelling emphasizes the onlooker or worshipper whose eyes are fixed on externals. The beauty of the building which is part of the "glorie" with which God "serv'd of old" may distract the "seeer" rather than carry him beyond to the divine. The verb "crave" helps this meaning --it is a strong word to use under these circumstances. It personifies the architectural image and suggests that beauty has the potential to gather to itself that which, by right, belongs to God. In "The Elixir" Herbert uses another architectural image to convey the same idea:

> A man that looks on glasse,
> On it may stay his eye;
> Or if he pleaseth, through it passe,
> And then the heav'n espie. (9-12)

The "seeer" who admires only the magnificence of the temple is blind to the real meaning of "Sion," "But I have chosen Jerusalem that my name might be there" (II Chron. 6.6). The ambiguity, however, makes it possible that both builders and seeers, may, in fact, be looking beyond the outward adornment and be "building" and "seeing" within the artifacts the God who gave evidence of his acceptance of the temple and Solomon's prayer of dedication by, "the fire which came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the house. And the priests could not enter the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house" (II Chron. 7:1-2). This interpretation deepens the meaning of the first line, "Lord, with what glorie wast thou serv'd of old" (1). "Glorie" can be taken first as the outward show and ceremony, but it can also refer to the glory which was God's own presence in his temple, the Shekinah, whose disappearance from Zion as a result of Israel's idolatry was mourned by the prophet Ezekiel, "Then the glory of the Lord departed from off the threshold of the house" (Ezek. 10.18). In the covert reference to the Shekinah Herbert deliberately invokes the Jewish equivalent of the Holy Spirit, "which became, with other Old Testament ideas or derivatives, Word, Wisdom, Spirit, etc., a bridge between man's corporeality and God's transcendence."[8] This becomes clearer as the poem, considered as a whole, draws attention to the relationship between the Old and New Dispensations, of which Rosemond Tuve says:

> Herbert is almost as preoccupied with the relation between the Old Dispensation and the New as are the typological materials and the allegorical glosses which he so often echoes; considerations of God as Law or rigorous Justice and God as Love are thematic not haphazard in his work, and to recognise this theme is to become aware of a unity in the whole body of his poetry which Herbert did not live to perfect but which is an aesthetic satisfaction

to anyone who reads him whole. 9

The third possible meaning for "seeers" is the pun on the word, and that, again, is linked to "glorie" and mysticall." The Old Testament seers or prophets were continually preoccupied with the need to preserve the transcendent "glorie" of the temple, and aware of the mysterious foreshadowing of the glory yet to come to Sion, "...they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord, and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem, neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart" (Jer. 3.17). The seers' duty was to warn and encourage Israel to maintain the temple in its first glorious estate.

But in the second stanza Herbert moves to suggest the temple and its appurtenances are not of great importance to God,

> Yet all this glorie, all this pomp and state
> Did not affect thee much, was not thy aim;
> Something there was, that sow'd debate:
> Wherefore thou quitt'st thy ancient claim:
> And now thy Architecture meets with sinne;
> For all thy frame and fabrick is within. 7-12

With all its beauty and elaborate sacrificial system Solomon's temple itself was but a foreshadowing of God's wider plan of redemption for all men. The effect of the first unequivocal statement is almost to disparage the temple worship, but the second has an enigmatical quality which somewhat mitigates the dismissive tone, "Something there was that sow'd debate" (9). The "Something" provides the reason "Wherefore thou quitt'st thy ancient claim" (10), but its exact meaning has to be drawn from the context. As with "seeers" it probably has more than one possible interpretation. It could be the sin which continually came between Jehovah and his Chosen

People. They failed to see through "all this pomp and state," and understand that his first requirement was a contrite heart, "I dwell in the high and holy place with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit" (Is.57.15). The word "sow'd" in conjunction with the "Something" gives another but related meaning. It recalls Christ's parable of the last Judgement and the enemy who came "...and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way" (Matt. 13.25) and whom Christ identified as the Devil. But the "Something" must ultimately represent quite the opposite of these two meanings. Jesus Christ is sometimes "the stumbling block", but he is also the corner stone of the church. In the Old Testament "the stumbling block" is God's punishment for sin, "When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commits iniquity and I lay a stumbling block before him he shall die" (Ezek.3.20). In the New Testament "the stumbling block" for the Jews is Christ's coming in the form of a servant and not in the longed-for Messianic glory. Paul said of the Jews, "they sought it [righteousness] not by faith but, as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone and rock of offence, and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed" (Rom.9.33). So Christ's coming "sow'd debate," "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth, I come not to send peace, but a sword" (Matt. 10.35). In the ambiguity of "Something" Herbert has quietly interjected a second architectural metaphor which is of utmost importance to the overall concept of "Sion." It acts, too, as a pivot to turn the meditation from a consideration of man's building activities to God's.

The Edenic covenant called for the redemption of mankind as a

whole. Genesis records that God cursed the serpent and said,"I will put emnity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed, he shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3.15). The presence of sin in the world demanded the radical remedy of the cross as the following poem, "Home," makes clear:

> When man was lost, thy pitie lookt about
> To see what help in th' earth or skie:
> But there was none; at least no help without:
> The help did in thy bosome lie.
> Oh show thy self to me,
> Or take me up to thee!
>
> There lay thy sonne: and must he leave that nest,
> That hive of sweetnesse, to remove
> Thraldome from those, who would not at a feast
> Leave one poore apple for thy love?
> Oh show thy, & c. (13-24)

Christ's death and resurrection and the formation of the infant church in Jerusalem certainly "sow'd debate," and the calling out of the Church throughout the Roman world superceded temple worship. But "Wherefore thou quittest thy ancient claim"(10) refers not only to the superfluity of temple worship, historically enforced, with its type of sacrifice pointing to that of Christ, but also the "claim" God had on his ancient race, the Jews, who during the Church age are in the same position as the Gentiles, under "the election of grace" (Rom. 11.5). God's wider plan of redemption had, therefore, never centered on temple worship. Although the temple was an important part of his dealings with his Chosen People, it was never "his aim." Christ prophesized to the woman of Samaria "... the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what. We know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when true

worshippers shall worship the father in spirit and in truth" (John 4.21-23).

Herbert is driving towards this idea in "Wherefore thou quittest thy ancient claim:/And now thy Architecture meets with sinne;/For all thy frame and fabric is within" (10-12). With the word "now" the reader is struck by the poet's change of tense, from the past to the present. To this point the poem has viewed man as the architect and builder of the temple, although God's over-ruling has been implied, but "now" the divine Architect is present, not in his role of creator of the universe, but as building "within" something antithetical to sinne, with a suggestion of Christian warfare in the word "meets." The conflation of familiar metaphors represents the epitome of Herbert's thought on the human condition. If The Temple was not Herbert's own choice of title for his work, but Nicholas Ferrar's,[10] we can be certain it would meet with the poet's approbation, precisely because in the architectural metaphor it embraces the entire Biblical record of God's dealings with men, with its inherent suggestion of conflict.

The Old Testament sacrificial system is assumed to have begun with the first parents, since God clothed Adam and Eve with coats of skin, and Abel's sacrifice of a lamb was acceptable, while Cain's was not. It culminated in the temple system of sacrifice which looked forward to Christ, "...the lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Man's problem is the sinful heart inherited from Adam and this separates him from a holy and just God, who must judge sin to be true to his own nature. Since God's desire is to have his creature in fellowship once again with himself the promise reiterated throughout the Old Testament is that man's stony recalcitrant heart will be replaced by the "heart of flesh" (Ezek. 11.19)

--the prerequisite for restored fellowship with the divine. The conception of man as the temple of the Holy Spirit is Pauline, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom ye have of God ..." (I Cor.6.19), and he extends the metaphor to embrace the whole Church:

> Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners
> but fellow saints and of the household of God:
> And are built upon the foundations of the apostles
> and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief
> corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed
> together groweth unto an holy temple to the Lord;
> (Eph. 2.19-21)

In "Sion" Herbert takes this Biblical architectural image, well-worn with long usage, and gives it such fresh power and impetus that it strikes home to the reader with the ease of what is familiar and accepted, yet at the same time giving him the jolt which accompanies the apprehension of something new and vibrant. Throughout The Temple Herbert varies his use of this imagery so that each time it reflects some new insight directly related to God's way of redemption in Christ. The young man in The Church-porch is told, "Christ purged his temple; so must thou thy heart "(423). In "The Church-floore", after figuratively considering the disastrous effects of Sinne and Death ,the last two lines triumphantly praise God's power to accomplish the miracle of transformation in the human heart, "Blest be the Architect, whose art/Could build so strong in a weak heart" (19-20). But after "Sion" the poem in which Herbert most fully explores this mysterious phenomenon by means of an architectural image is "The Altar." This hieroglyphic poem is a most appropriate introduction to The Church, portraying as it does the doctrine of the Church

as the spiritual realization of the Old Testament temple, and indicating the essential condition for the believer's initiation and continuance in the faith:

A broken ALTAR, Lord, thy servant reares,
Made of a heart, and cemented with teares:
Whose parts are as thy hand did frame;
No workmans tool hath touch'd the same.
A HEART alone
Is such a stone,
As nothing but
Thy pow'r doth cut.
Wherefore each part
Of my hard heart
Meets in this frame,
To praise thy Name:
That, if I chance to hold my peace,
These stones to praise thee may not cease.
O let thy blessed S A C R I F I C E be mine,
And sanctifie this A L T A R to be thine.

To a literal - minded reader two difficulties present themselves in fully appreciating this poem. The first lies in recognising the hieroglyphic as specifically Christian because, "The shape of the poem recalls rather a pagan place of sacrifice"[11] which is in apparent contradiction to the Christian content, and, second, its position as the first poem in The Church can be thought incongruous since the altar or communion table in a Christian church usually lies at the furthest point from the entrance, in the chancel at the east end. However, in many churches and cathedrals the eye is carried by the very length of the nave to focus first on the altar, and Herbert as a poet and musician would doubtless have been acutely sensitive to this. It can also be argued that the poem's shape and position are reflections of two occurrences common in Herbert's lifetime; the communion table or altar frequently was placed in the nave or lower end of the chancel rather than the East wall, and a trestle shaped

communion table was often used.[12] If both circumstances combined then a table placed parallel to the nave would strike the eye of the beholder in much the shape of Herbert's poem, and it is interesting to note that in the years Herbert spent in Trinity College, Cambridge the communion table was positioned in the nave.[13] In the Williams manuscript and in the 1633 edition of The Temple it is noticeable that the pedestal is rather more elongated than it is commonly printed now -- for instance in the Patrides edition -- perhaps emphasising a trestle effect.

The visual difficulty with the poem, can, of course, be eliminated by dwelling on Herbert's deliberate dedication of himself and his art to sacred rather than secular verse. The form of the poem can then be seen as a reversal of something usually reserved for the love poem in order to consecrate it to sacred use. In any case, there can be no doubt that the hieroglyph works together with the content to reinforce the solidity and severity of the dominant image. As Higgins says,"The meditation aspect of Herbert's poem, far from conflicting with the game implied by the shape metatacizes it into a new synthesis..."[14] The altar shape suggests the Old and New Dispensations which are the theme of the poem, and indeed of The Church. "No workman's tool has touched the same" (3) is a reference to the Jewish altar of unhewn stone that Moses was instructed to build. Subsequently, the great altar of unhewn stone was the most prominent feature in later temples.[15] The new Dispensation was ushered in by Christ's sacrifice, and it is the appropriation of his righteousness that justifies the repentant sinner, just as it is an ongoing dependence on the Holy Spirit through the means of grace that

sanctifies him, "Oh let thy blessed Sacrifice be mine, And sanctifie this altar to be thine" (15-16). The believer can offer his sacrifice of praise, but he still has to contend with the old and new natures within him, as Herbert says in "Love unknown", "A Lord I had,/And have, of whom some grounds which may improve,/I hold two lives, and both lives in me" (3-5). The agonising process of sanctification is vividly portrayed in many poems in The Church but perhaps nowhere as poignantly as in this poem:

> ...So I went
> To fetch a sacrifice out of my fold,
> Thinking with that, which I did thus present,
> To warm his love, which I did fear grew cold.
> But as my heart did tender it, the man
> Who was to take it from me, slipt his hand,
> And threw my heart into the scalding pan;
> My heart that brought it (do you understand?)
> The offerers heart. Your heart was hard, I fear. (29-37)

"The Altar" presents many difficulties in interpretation when the theological underpinnings go unrecognised. Joseph Summers says, "There is hardly a phrase in "The Altar" which does not derive from a specific biblical passage,"[16] and he concludes that "the poem is a construction upon which others may offer their sacrifices; it is a 'speaking altar' which continually offers up its own sacrifice of praise." This is certainly part of the poet's purpose, but the interpretation does not elucidate the difficulty that Helen Vendler perceives when she asks, "But is it truly possible to have one's heart converted into an altar by God and still remain hostile to him?" She resolves it by suggesting,

> There is one final step, apparently, which God, having constructed the altar out of the recalcitrant heart, has yet to take: he has to sacrifice something (and that something will be himself) on the altar, put it to use. For this he needs a priest, to repeat on

> the altar his own original sacrifice in offering himself on the Cross. Only by becoming that priest will Herbert "activate" the hard heart, make it functional, let it do more than utter praises by its mere shape. 17

But the short answer to her original question is "Yes". It is possible to have a converted heart and still be hostile to God, as "Love Unknown" and the rest of The Church show. The Christian's ever-present struggle is conveyed by the change of verb tense in "The Altar". The fact that the believer is justified in God's sight is in the past, "Whose parts are as thy hand did frame;/No workman's tool hath touched the same" (3-4). God's grace alone is capable of producing "a contrite heart" in the first place, with which his servant can rear his "broken Altar." The work within belongs to God, although man plays his part through repentance. But the two lives in the "servant" mean that it is possible that if the "I" of the old nature should "chance to hold my peace" the "stones" of the new building within, "to praise thee may not cease."

Through the word and sacrament the Christian must continually appropriate Christ's sacrifice for sin to remain in a state of grace. Only then is the altar of the human heart cleansed and sanctified, ready to offer its own sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. The stone imagery in this poem tends to confuse the reader of Herbert until it is realised that he has departed from his usual practice of contrasting the "hard heart" with the "heart of flesh." Here the image remains the stone as it contrasts the "whole" heart with "the broken and contrite heart." All these metaphors have Biblical precedents, and "The Altar" shows Herbert's versatility in

revivifying the known and familiar so that it strikes the reader with new force.

In "Sion" Herbert portrays the same struggle as he turns from the consideration of man as architect to the Pauline conception of the individual Christian, and by extension, the Church, as the temple of the Holy Spirit, "There thou are struggling with a peevish heart,/Which sometimes crosseth thee, thou sometimes it" (13-14). The poet's selection of "peevish" as an adjective to describe the state of the human heart is particularly apt in view of its wide range of meaning in the early seventeenth century, from mere silliness to outright madness. In the preface to his translation of the Bible, Cranmer called the heart, "Not only foolyshe, frowarde and obstinate but also perverse and indurate."[18] Twentieth century usage tends to equate "peevish" with "querulous" and that sense, too, is present in Herbert. It was the capriciousness and obduracy of the human heart that brought God's judgments in the Old Testament, "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it?" (Jer.17.9). Herbert's struggle with his own "peevish heart" is the basis for The Church. It is his rigorous examination of its vacillations and the uncompromising honesty about what he finds there that draws the reader to empathise with his profound spiritual and psychological insight. Rosemond Tuve says:

> Too much has been made of the Herbert who had inner conflicts over giving up the life of the world and the flesh to go into orders; the theme of any symbolic treatment of the love of the soul for Christ of the Church for the Bridegroom, is the wooing of that soul into gradual submission.
>
> .....
>
> Herbert's poetry is personal for the same reason it is Christocentric; the central principle of life as he

> in his person has been able with pain to discover it
> is self-abnegating love. 19

In the third stanza Herbert more overtly superimposes the traditional Christian metaphor of warfare upon his larger architectural image:

> There thou art struggling with a peevish heart,
> Which sometimes crosseth thee, thou sometimes it:
> The fight is hard on either part.
> Great God doth fight, he doth submit,
> All Solomons sea of brasse and world of stone
> Is not so deare to thee as one good grone. (13-18)

According to Walton, Herbert wanted his work published only if "it may turn to the advantage of any dejected poor Soul" for his poetry is the "picture of the many spiritual Conflicts that have past betwixt God and my Soul before I could subject mine to the will of Jesus my Master: in whose service I have now found perfect freedom."[20] Even if this statement is not literally accurate, Herbert's poetry bears witness to its truth. The depiction of this struggle in "Sion" hints that the "...peevish heart,/Which sometimes crosseth thee" (13-14) is demanding its own way, and that the divine reaction is sometimes to block its wilfulness. The unremitting nature of the conflict is summed up, "The fight is hard on either part" (15).

There follows now what Rosemond Tuve calls one of Herbert's "leaps of thought",[21] "Great God doth fight, he doth submit" (16). The repetition of the word "fight" tends to allow the mind to skip over the full stop at the end of line 15. The reader has been following the poet's idea that God "fights" to have his way with the "peevish heart", but now the phrase "he doth submit" stops him short. Reason tells him that the omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient God

would not "submit" to the vagaries of a"peevish heart." But the phrase "he doth submit" anticipates the following two lines, "All Solomon's sea of brasse and world of stone/Is not so deare to thee as one good grone" (17-18). The realisation dawns that the poet has turned from the contemplation of a heart sometimes opposed to the divine will to see it as it repents and prays "one good grone." The knowledge that the poet is now talking of prayer illumines "he doth submit." Herbert makes frequent use of military metaphors when he talks about prayer. In "Prayer"(I)he calls it "Engine against th' Almightie, sinners towre,/Reversed thunder, Christ-side-piercing spear" (5-6), and in "Prayer"(II)he says "...how suddenly/ May our requests thine ear invade!" (2-3). The speaker's confident assertion in "Artillerie" is:

> Then we are shooters both, and thou dost deigne
> To enter combat with us, and contest
> With thine own clay..... (25-27)

If Herbert seems to be making extravagant claims for prayer they are no more so than the Biblical ones; Christ himself said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Matt. 7.7).

The new covenant God has made with man relegates the "glorie" of temple worship to the past as far as man is concerned, but in the divine economy past, present and future are the eternal present, as the "Is" of line 18 indicates. Solomon's "sea of brasse and world of stone" are still dear to God, in as far as they truly served him, but, "not so deare to thee as one good grone." This qualifies even further the sense of rejection in "Yet all this glorie, all

this pomp and state/Did not affect thee much, was not thy aim" (7-8). The word "grone" is associated with the pain and misery of the human condition, but in Herbert it cannot be taken for sorrow at the rise and fall of Fortune's wheel. The believers' grones are associated with repentance for "the sin that so easily doth beset us" (Heb. 12.1), and are wrung from the "heart of flesh" or "contrite heart" that characterises the "new man". The hard heart is incapable of grones, as Herbert says in "The Sinner."

> Yet, Lord restore thine image, heare my call:
> And though my hard heart scarce to thee can grone,
> Remember that thou once didst write in stone. (13-14)

"Grones" are also the earnest prayers of the saints, as the following poem "Home" shows:

> What have I left, that I should stay and grone?
> The most of me to heav'n is fled:
> My thoughts and joys are all packt up and gone,
> And for their old acquaintance plead.
> O show thyself to me.
> Or take me up to thee! (67-72)

The God who will not despise a humble and contrite heart in "Gratefulnesse", "...hast made a sigh and grone/Thy joyes" (19-20).

It seems as though the music of the new temple is "grones"; the poem has been hinting at the music in Solomon's temple in words like "flourished", "pomp" and "embellished". The magnificence of the music matches the grandeur of the "sea of brasse" and "world of stone." Solomon's great bronze laver for ritual cleansing stood between the porch of the temple and the altar for burnt offerings. The Bible calls it a "brazen sea" which held "two thousand baths" (I Kings 7. 23-26). If all other evidence were lacking the

splendour of the "world of stone" could be gauged by the water supply drawn daily from reservoirs known as Solomon's Pools still in use near Bethlehem, five miles distant from Jerusalem, and brought to the temple by a series of aqueducts and cisterns.[22] Hutchinson points out that, "a 'world' is used by Shakespeare and other contemporaries of a vast quantity" "all that world of wealth have I drawn" or "buy a world of happy days."[23] The phrase has echoes of Christ's sombre words in response to his disciple's ingenuous admiration of Herod's temple; "Master see what manner of stones and what buildings are here! And Jesus, answering, said unto him 'Seest thou these great buildings? There shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down'" (Mark 13.2).

Some of this sense of desolation and destruction is carried forward to the fourth stanza,

> And truly brasse and stones are heavie things,
> Tombes for the dead, not temples fit for thee:
> But grones are quick, and full of wings,
> And all their notions upward be;
> And ever as they mount, like larks they sing;
> The note is sad, yet musick for a King. (19-24)

"Brasse and stones" are first thought of as inanimate objects at the bottom of the great chain of being -- hard, unyielding, heavy, tied inexorably to "that cesspool of the universe,"[24] yet they are important in the overall order of the universe, for "...though they have their sev'rall wayes,/Yet in their being joyn with one advise/ To honour thee" ("Providence," 145-146). They have their uses, too, for man, "Who hath the vertue to expresse the rare/And curious vertues both of herbs and stones?" (73-74). Their durable qualities lend themselves to practical use as "Tombes for

the dead." Herbert points out in "Church-monuments" that "...his birth/Written in dustie heraldrie and lines" (9) is affixed to "Jeat and Marble."

The apposition of "tombes and "temples" shows Herbert's extraordinary facility in the handling of the architectural imagery to make it carry yet another meaning. Tomb and temple reverberate with "Sion." Earlier in the poem stone was implied in its figurative application to Christ, at once the cornerstone of the Church and the stumbling block of the Jews, "Something there was that sow'd debate" (9), and it was implied again in the Architecture which "meets with sinne" (11). The New Testament depicts Christian believers as both temples in themselves and part of the corporate temple which is the Church. The apostle Peter calls Christians "...lively stones [are] built up in a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 2.5). Literally, stones are "heavie things", figuratively they are the building materials of the spiritual temple of New Dispensation, founded on Christ, "the chief cornerstone" (Eph. 2.20). God is the Architect, yet believer and pastor alike have the duty to "build themselves up." The country parson shares in the task of edification as he catechizes his congregation, "there being three points of his duty, the one to infuse a competent knowledge of salvation in every one of his flock, the other to multiply, and build up this knowledge to a spiritual temple."[25] With the juxtaposed images of "Tombes" and "temples" and their connection to the earlier architectural imagery and title Herbert has skilfully bridged the gulf between Solomon's temple of the Old Dispensation and the spiritual temple of the New. It is a technique

which he made peculiarly his own, which, as Rosemond Tuve says,

> ... is typical of Herbert's writings; using a traditional central invention or imaginative similitude, he bores down within it to discover new veins of meaning. The method and the nature of the witty parallels, and the simultaneous presention of the physical church and the temple built in the heart as one and the same thing, are traditional. 26

Having now established the idea of the new temple replacing that of Solomon, Herbert returns to his first theme of worship in the temple, "Lord, with what glorie wast thou serv'd of old,/When Solomon's temple stood and flourished!"(1-2), and he brings into the open the musical metaphors which have been inherent in the larger architectural imagery:

> But grones are quick, and full of wings,
> And all their motions upward be;
> And ever as they mount, like larks they sing;
> The note is sad, yet musick for a king. (21-24

The object of the new temple, like the old, is to glorify God. The sacrificial system has been rendered obsolete by Christ's perfect sacrifice:

> So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation. For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. (Heb. 9.28, 10.1)

But the Christian believer is still to offer "a sacrifice of praise" (Heb. 13.15), although "grones" do not seem to be "a joyful noise unto the Lord" (Ps. 100.1). Grones may have "wings", but it is hard to accept that they sound anything like larks. In praising "grones" as "musick for a King", Herbert is not discounting the music of

praise in the visible Church. He himself loved music as Walton testifies:

> though he was a lover of retiredness, yet his love to Musick was such, that he usually went twice every week on certain appointed days, to the Cathedral Church in Salisbury; and at his return would say, That his time spent in Prayer, and Cathedral Musick, elevated his Soul, and was his Heaven upon Earth: But before his return thence to Bemerton, he would usually sing and play his part, at an appointed private Musick-meeting; and to justifie this practice, he would often say, Religion does not banish mirth, but only moderates, and sets rules to it" 27

Even without Walton's testimony it would be clear from Herbert's poetry that he enjoyed music. His two "Antiphons" are written to be sung, and the rhythm of much of his verse betrays his propensity. In "Church-musick" he calls it "sweetest of sweet"--the kind of language he usually reserves for poetry and Christ himself, and goes on "You know the way to heavens doore" (12). If he considers "grones" the best music for the new temple it is certainly not because he denigrates the beauty of music, any more than he denigrates his poetic art, but in the last analysis, he believes "The fineness which a hymne or psalme affords,/Is when the soul unto the lines accords" ("A true Hymne", 9-10).

The "grones" in "Sion" emanate from the heart, and the word "quick" which suggests that they are alive enough to wing their way heavenwards also implies God's instant recognition of the believer's prayer, "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers" (1 Pet. 3.12). The "grones" result, too, from the pain of seeming delays on God's side to answer prayer -- the speaker's complaint in "Home":

Come Lord, my head doth burn, my heart is sick
While thou dost ever, ever stay:
Thy long deferrings wound me to the quick,
My spirit gaspeth night and day.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee! (1-6)

The life of faith, with its war on the old nature, necessarily results in "grones." Those "groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8.26)--signify both repentance for sins committed and longing to be finally released from the old nature with its tendency to sin--to be "Home":

O loose this frame, this knot of man untie!
That my free soul may use her wing,
Which is now pinion'd with mortalitie,
As an intangled, hamper'd thing.
O show thyself to me,
Or take me up to thee! (67-67)

These agonized grones also work to afford protection for the devout believer in his war with "the world, the flesh and the Devil." According to the well-known adage of Herbert's day "Prayer should be the key of the day and the lock of the night." [28] The "grone" of a humble and contrite heart is the music Heaven most wants to hear. It is the music that the "pratler" of "Conscience" cannot abide, "Music to thee doth howl" (4). It is the worship of the new temple which will be transformed in the new Jerusalem, ". . . Like larks they sing;/The note is sad, yet musick for a King" (23-24).

"Sion" has depended largely on Biblical metaphors which contrast the Old Dispensation with the New. The major image of Solomon's temple, with its earthly pomp and splendour figures the Old, while the New is shown to be a spiritual edifice within the individual, and by extension the mystical body of Christ which is the visible and invisible Church. The title suggests the Jewish temples, Christ's sacrifice, and the Church triumphant as the bride of Christ, or new Jerusalem. The confrontation of the old and new natures within the

believer is depicted in the struggle that ensues when "thy Architecture meets with Sinne" (11) with traditional imagery of Christian warfare. Herbert conflates lesser architectural features within the greater to depict both the magnificence of Solomon's temple, and its essential earthiness, in contrast to the mystical and heavenly. The major architectural imagery is directly related to the title of Herbert's work The Temple, and its threefold division into The Church-porch, The Church, and The Church Militant as he uses it to portray the Christian's warfare against "the world, the flesh and the Devil."

Footnotes

[1] The New Bible Dictionary has an excellent short account of the history of Jerusalem, pp. 614-619.

[2] See Tuve pp. 124-125. She gives here a brief explication of "Sion" and remarks on the centrality of "the new Ecclesia built in the hearts of the faithful" in Herbert's thought.

[3] II Sam. 7.4-13.

[4] See note on "Sion," 1,6, in Works, p. 514.

[5] Patrides, p. 120.

[6] Rickey, p.6.

[7] Ibid., p. 60.

[8] The New Bible Dictionary, p. 1174.

[9] Tuve, p. 123.

[10] Amy M. Charles points out that the title "The Temple" and the epigraph based on Psalm 28.8 "In his Temple doth every man speake of his honour" are not present in either W or B. She says "In no way does he point toward a title for the entire work or emphasize any figure of constructing a temple. For Herbert, the natural place of worship of God is a church, not a temple. And during the seventeenth century the little volume was generally referred to as "The Church." These are undeniable facts, but the architectural imagery in "Sion" and elsewhere in Herbert's work makes it clear that the "temple" which is of overwhelming importance to the poet is that within the Christian believer. Herbert says in an early letter to his mother "God intends that [the human soul] to be a sacred Temple for himself to dwell in . . .," Works, p. 374. And the poet describes in A Priest to the Temple the parson's role in building "a spirituall Temple," p. 255.

[11] Patrides, p. 45.

[12] In their discussion of the pre-Laudian altar G.W.O. Addleshaw and Frederick Etchells in The Architectural Setting of Anglican Worship (London, 1948), pp. 108-9), point out that one result of the Reformation in England was that it became usual during the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I to keep the communion table--"a heavy and cumbersome object to move"--at all times in the nave or at the lower end of the chancel and not near the east wall.

[13] Joseph H. Summers directs attention to the fact that Trinity College was well-known for its strong Protestant bias, and "was second only to Emmanuel in the number of university men it furnished to New England" p. 31.

[14]Dick Higgins, George Herbert's Pattern Poems: In Their Tradition (New York, 1977), p. 15.

[15]Alfred Edersheim, The Temple: Its Ministry and Services as They Were at the time of Jesus Christ (London, 1959), p. 54.

[16]Summers, p. 142.

[17]Vendler, p. 62.

[18]OED, 1971.

[19]Tuve, p. 126.

[20]Walton, p. 314.

[21]Rosemond Tuve comments on how what often appear to be "eccentricities, ellipses, or inexplicable leaps of [the] thought," p. 112, can be explained by a knowledge of the traditional language of images. In this instance the imagery is Biblical rather than mediaeval and Biblical precedents clarify it.

[22]Edersheim, p. 36.

[23]Shakespeare, Henry VIII, iii,2,211; Richard III, i,iv,6.

[24]Tillyard, p. 17.

[25]Works, p. 255.

[26]Tuve, p. 153.

[27]Walton, p. 42.

[28]This seventeenth century proverb is not found in Herbert's Outlandish Proverbs, but is quoted in The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs as being current 1620 - 28. That Herbert knew of it is extremely likely since he changed the title of one of his "Prayer" poems in W to "Church-lock and key."

CONCLUSION

In "The World," "Man" and "Sion" George Herbert uses an extraordinary range of techniques and imaginative vision to infuse traditional architectural imagery with new life. The Biblical and mediaeval stress on hierarchy and inherent order in the universe has been complemented by a Renaissance insistence on symmetry and proportion, and the rejuvenated metaphors drive home some of the fundamental truths of the Christian faith with peculiar force and appeal. The image which recurs most frequently and with startling intensity is that of the mystical "temple" in the heart of the individual believer. The "building" is not achieved without suffering, and the conflict involved as "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh" gives rise to the searing pain of self-division. This accurate portrayal of the divided self accounts to a great extent for The Temple's universal appeal, while contributing significantly to its structure as an "oeuvre entire."

"Man" and "The World" are primarily meditations on the workings of Providence as the created universe is sustained, and human history enacted within it. The reader is invited to share the poet's sense of awe, wonder and delight as God discloses something of himself through his handiwork. But in both poems the architectural imagery expands to include the supernatural "building" within the Christian, "the temple of the Holy Ghost" which rests on the rock, Jesus Christ. The image also carries the idea of the believer as part of the larger "temple" which is the Church militant on earth, destined to become the Church triumphant as the New Covenant supercedes and completely

fulfils the Old in the new Jerusalem. In "Sion" the contrasting features of the Old and New Dispensations are explored in depth, and shed light on the meaning of The Temple as a title. If we cannot be certain the title is Herbert's own choice, we can be sure that the work's tripartite division into The Church-porch, The Church and The Church Militant represents Herbert's own long-considered thought, and in these titles we have three architectural images which are an intrinsic part of the whole idea of "temple."

We have seen how Herbert likes to root his imagery in the actual, and in "Man," "The World" and "Sion" it is plain that matter itself, far from being evil, does, in fact, "show forth the glory of God." This is particularly clear in "The World." For Herbert and those who share his faith, the actual church building has its essential place in the scheme of things. The Christian place of worship has evolved with the thought of the Jewish temple in the background, and acquired its own peculiar characteristics. Frédéric Debuyst says:

> It was called the house of God, and even the "temple of God" before showing itself to be the house of assembly, of God's family. It was a kind of synthesis between the old idea of the temple and the Christian idea of the Paschal meeting room.[1]

By using the church building as a central image Herbert shows his awareness of it as a mirror of the world and faith--from the great English cathedral to the humble parish church. Inside, both the world of nature and the world of grace are symbolically expressed. Outside, the physical setting of the building in the heart of the community, with the houses crowded all around, demonstrates the organic nature of the relationship. This profound sense of intimacy existing between Church and believer, church and community, runs

all though Herbert's work, and, as L. C. Knights comments, "it is a personal use of a more than personal idiom with its roots in tradition and the general life." [2]

The division of Herbert's work into The Church-porch, The Church and The Church Militant, therefore, has many ramifications. It takes up the idea of the Old and New Dispensations as it is presented in English iconography. Church and Synagogue are often symbolized by female figures carved in stone, and we can be certain that Herbert knew the two fine statues in the Judgment porch of Lincoln Cathedral.[3] "Sion" is the poem which best exemplifies this idea of synagogue and church, explores it thoroughly, and brings out the Pauline metaphor of the temple within the heart of each Christian. The aptness of The Temple as an overall title is beautifully shown in this poem. The intriguing threefold partition has always been recognised as an integral and meaningful part of Herbert's work, and yet always been something of a riddle. Christopher Harvey thought that he had solved it when he published The Synagogue, or The Shadow of the Temple, in imitation of Mr. George Herbert, a collection of poems based on a walk round an English parish church and its environs. Harvey composed poems on "The Church Yard," "The Church-Stile" and "The Church-Gate," and nothing escaped his eye--even the Sexton, Clerk and Church Warden are celebrated in verse. His collection of poetry was frequently bound with The Temple in the seventeenth century, presumably because it seemed to complete Herbert's project.[4]

The conviction that a neat pattern like Harvey's fails to do justice to the subtlety and fullness of Herbert's work comes when

The Temple is read as a whole, for Harvey takes cognizance only of the superficial implications of the basic architectural image. This sense of dissatisfaction with a partial explanation of the title and its threefold division has led to numerous other attempts to explain it more adequately.[5] The temple of Solomon or a classical temple have been mooted; and the structure of a Salesian meditation, the liturgy, the Church year, the "pilgrimage" of the Christian life, a religious emulation of books on the courtly love tradition have all been put forward, but all fail to give complete satisfaction.

Herbert does have groups of poems which have starting points in Church furnishings, or the Church year, or the liturgy, but the pattern does not carry through, although there is enough of it to give the certainty that the work is not random. The poet's own carry-over of the major divisions from W to the Bodleian manuscript, and his careful placing of "The Altar" and "The Sacrifice" in their original positions at the beginning, with "Love" (III) at the end, indicate that he did have an overall plan in mind. The idea of Salesian meditation is an attractive theory, but would require an ascending scale of assurance to fulfil it, as would the pilgrimage or an imitation of the courtly love book. It is apparent that the later poems in The Temple have as much conflict as the earlier, something which so disturbed George Herbert Palmer that he undertook to re-arrange them.[6] At first glance it seems that the tripartite division of Solomon's temple offers a logical explanation, but it quickly loses credibility when The Church Militant cannot be correlated with the Jewish temple's Holy of Holies, unless the title were altered to The Church Triumphant.[7]

In The Living Temple Stanley Fish puts forward the newest notion--

that Herbert envisaged himself in the role of the poet-catechist.[8] Fish observes that the centre of discovery for Herbert is always Jesus Christ, and Rosemund Tuve, too, points out that his poems are inevitably Christocentric.[9] According to Professor Fish, The Temple reflects the spiritual temple which is built in the human heart, with assistance from the catechist, to be the dwelling place of God. This is true as far as it goes, for the role of the catechist in edifying the Church has always had a most important place. But the more important emphasis for Herbert in The Temple is the direct and intimate relationship between the believer and Christ, which leaves little room for a third party. Professor Fish, however, contends that the tripartite structure is based on the role of the catechumen as he is instructed and baptised in The Church-porch, admitted to Holy Communion and edified further in The Church, in order to serve in The Church Militant.[10]

But this idea also fails to provide a fully satisfying explanation. Just as The Church Militant cannot be accommodated to the analogy with the Holy of Holies in the Jewish temple, Professor Fish's theory of the catechumen cannot be made to "fit" properly with The Church-porch. This long poem can in no way be seen as basic instruction in Christian doctrine. The Church-porch is obviously good advice directed to the young Christian as he deals with the ordinary situations and problems in the world, including those which relate to church attendance. The person who is to be "rhymed to good" is plainly already part of the Church and its fellowship--already baptised--"Beware of lust: it doth pollute and foul/Whom God in Baptisme washt with his own blood./It blots thy lesson written in thy soul" (7-9). Amy Charles considers The Church-porch to be a very early poem--"a date

at least as early as 1614 it is possible for the composition",[11] and that it may have been written especially for the poet's younger brother, Henry, "at the time of his earliest encounter with life in France." She goes on:

> The accents of the elder brother in "The Church-porch" are made more palatable in stanza after stanza in which wit echoes the delight the two younger brothers took in proverbs. . . [12]

However, the study of the architectural imagery in "Man," "The World" and "Sion" does suggest yet another explanation and one which "fits" better than those already mentioned. All three poems imply that the most important "temple" to be built up is the one within the believer, who is also one of the "lively stones" in the greater temple of the Church, visible and invisible, whose foundation and architect is Christ himself. Herbert's predilection for the concrete as a starting point for his imagery suggests that he really does have in mind exactly what is meant by The Church-porch, The Church and The Church Militant. The Temple is written for "the poor dejected soul" who is willing" to turn [his] eyes hither . . . and make a gain" ("The Dedication"); in other words for the Christian struggling to put off the "old man" and put on the "new." Every Christian promises, through godparents as an infant, and on his own behalf at confirmation, to renounce "the world, the flesh and the Devil"[13] and I would advance the theory that Herbert's use of the major architectural image is meant to, and does in fact, correlate with this promise.

The Church-porch is where the believer meets with the "world," and in Herbert's day this was quite literally the place where worldly business was carried on in a Christian society, as G. N. Cook explains:

> The transaction of legal business, the preparation of agreements and of documents relating to property and

> parish affairs often took place in the Church porch. By the end of the fifteenth century churches of any size invariably had a porch with an upper chamber for such purposes. Disputes between parishioners which would be the subject of litigation in these days were settled amicably in the porch chamber, the village priest acting as a peace-making intermediary. [14]

In The Country Parson Herbert makes it clear that the parson should be "not onely a Pastour, but a Lawyer also, and a Phisician"[15] for his, as we have seen, was "no cloistered virtue," but encompassed all men's affairs. Bodily and spiritual welfare are inter-related, and the practical advice in The Church-porch is directed to both ends. The Church is the largest and by far the most important part of The Temple. It is concerned with the individual's constant and unremitting battle with the "flesh" or "old man" or "old nature" in order to conform to Christ. The works of the "flesh" are overcome by means of grace, in Word, prayer and sacrament, within the liturgical year of the Anglican communion. And again, in The Country Parson, Herbert suggests practical measures for the believer in urging him to pray at least twice a day.[16] The whole of The Church is eloquent testimony to how seriously Herbert strove to "put off the works of the flesh" and "put on Christ." The Church Militant is the wider church in action throughout the world as it engages Satan, the lord and ruler of all in the world not conforming to Christ. This is a prophetic poem which sees the magnitude of the conflict before "judgement shall appeare" (277), and death and hell cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20,14).

Inherent in the architectural images explored in "Man," "The World" and "Sion," renunciation of "the world, the flesh and the Devil" is necessary to build up the individual believer and the whole Church, in order that the new Jerusalem may be established. That Herbert meant

his tripartite division of The Temple to convey this is consistent with his practice of using architectural imagery to engender many different, though related, nuances of meaning, all of them in harmony with orthodox Protestant Christian teaching. So an understanding of the way Herbert deploys such imagery in these lesser poems leads to an apprehension of what the poet accomplishes with the larger, overriding images of The Temple, The Church-porch, The Church, and The Church Militant. This understanding of what the architectural image achieves enables us to perceive The Temple as an organic whole--a work of art which can be understood and explained best in terms of the Christian experience it depicts; an experience which, as "the flesh lusting against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh" is readily comprehensible by every human being, who, of necessity, is subject to inner tensions and conflicts.[17] The universal appeal of George Herbert rests heavily on the penetrating and vivid poetic depiction of such experience, and, more importantly, on its resolution.

Footnotes

[1]Frederic Debuyst, Modern Architecture and Christian Celebration (Richmond, Virginia, 1968), p. 26.

[2]L. C. Knights, p. 114.

[3]F. H. Crossley, English Church Craftsmanship: An Introduction to the Work of the Mediaeval Period and Some Account of Later Developments. (London, 1941), p. 36. Amy M. Charles thinks that Herbert paid several visits to Lincoln Cathedral, although the "only surviving record of a visit . . . is the appearance of his name in Dean Honywood's list for the sermon on Whitsunday, 1629" p. 224.

[4]Bottrall, pp. 60-61.

[5]An excellent discussion of these theories is to be found in Stanley Fish's The Living Temple: George Herbert and Catechizing (Berkeley, 1978), pp. 9-11.

[6]Works, pp. lxii-iii.

[7]Fish, p. 9.

[8]Ibid., p. 40.

[9]Tuve, p. 126.

[10]Fish, p. 145.

[11]Charles, p. 82.

[12]Ibid., p. 83.

[13]The Book of Common Prayer. "The order of Baptism both Publick and Private."

[14]G. H. Cook, The English Medieval Parish Church (London, 1954), p. 34.

[15]Works, p. 259.

[16]Herbert adds, "four times on Sunday if they be well." He suggests that this is minimal in maintaining the Christian in spiritual health, for "the manifold wiles of Satan" are ever present ready to draw God's people into his net. "Besides this, the Godly have ever added some houres of prayer, as at nine, or at three, or at midnight, or as they think fit, and see cause, or rather as Gods spirit leads them." Works, p. 272.

[17]L. C. Knights, who did not share Herbert's Christian beliefs says, "The poems in which the fluctuating stages of this progress are recorded are important human documents because they handle with honesty and insight questions that, in one form or another, we all have to meet if we wish to come to terms with life" p. 130.

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